STORIES SHORT AND STORIES TALL.

SHORT STORIES

EDITED BY C. ARTHUR PEARSON (OF PEARSON'S WEEKLY)

No. 323. FOR WEEK ENDING MARCH 9, 1895. [PRICE ONE PENNY.

1 RISING SUN STOVE POLISH
EASIEST, QUICKEST, CHEAPEST, & BEST BLACKLEAD IN THE WORLD

N In HALF the TIME with B
N HALF the LABOUR you B
can produce MORE POLISH with TWO Penny Packets of RISING SUN than with HALF-DOZEN of ordinary Blacklead.

Sold in ½d., 1d. & 2d. Packets

THREE GREAT BOONS

3 MACK'S DOUBLE STARCH
CONTAINS IN PROPER PROPORTIONS GLOSS, BORAX, GUM, WAX, & &c.

REQUIRES no addition or preparation.
SAVES time, labour, and uncertainty.
PRODUCES beautiful white glossy linen.
Sold in 1d. Packets, or 3d. and 6d. Boxes.

Sample of any one post free 2 stamps
C. Chancellor & Co., London, E.C.

2 RISIN' SUN METAL POLISH
GIVES TO ALL KINDS OF METALS A BEAUTIFUL SOFT BRILLIANT POLISH.

With the MINIMUM of LABOUR this LIQUID POLISH produces a MOST BRILLIANT APPEARANCE, which lasts much longer than that produced by any Paste Polish.

Sold in 1d, 3d, 6d, & 1/- Bottles

100 YEARS' WORLD-WIDE RECORD OF SUCCESS!

NORTON'S CAMOMILE PILLS

INDIGESTION BILIOUSNESS HEADACHE
STOMACH & LIVER COMPLAINTS DEBILITY
The BEST of all TONICS and a GENTLE APERIENT.
Mild in Operation, Perfectly Safe, & Free from Injurious Drugs.
SOLD EVERYWHERE IN BOTTLES AT 1/1½, 2/9, AND 11/- EACH.
Ask for "NORTON'S CAMOMILE PILLS," and do not be persuaded to purchase an imitation.

PREPARED BY NORTON'S, LIMITED, 21, SPITAL SQUARE, LONDON, E.

NORTON'S
Trade Mark—One Little Bottle.

ARTISTIC ENAMELLED IRON SIGNS
AND
WHITE ENAMELLED COPPER LETTERS
(Highest Award, Paris Exhibition), for
TRADESMEN'S WINDOWS, FACIAS, SIGNS, OR TABLETS.

THE GARNIER ENAMELLED LETTER AND Advertising Sign Co., Limited, 61, FARRINGDON ROAD, LONDON, E.C.

Trade Mark E "Effectiveness."

The Durability, Elegance, and Striking Brilliancy of these have earned for them the reputation of being the most effective Medium for all kinds of indoor or outdoor Advertisements.

SWINGING SIGNS IN GREAT VARIETY
(Call and see Stock or send for Price Lists.)

IRON AND COPPER ENAMELLING COMPANY,
GENERAL ENAMELLERS ON STEEL, COPPER, & IRON REFLECTORS, HOLLOW WARE, &c.,
61, FARRINGDON ROAD, LONDON, E.C. (Near the Farringdon Road Station),
INVENTORS AND MANUFACTURERS.

AGENTS WANTED.

Digitized by Google

A Real Boon to Ladies.

TO LADIES
Especially to those who wish to know of a safe, certain, and speedy remedy for all irregularities and obstructions, a remedy which, under the most trying circumstances and in the most difficult and
OBSTINATE CASES,
NEVER FAILS TO AFFORD
RELIEF,
GENERALLY IN A FEW HOURS.
No case hopeless, failure is simply impossible, as Mrs. Snow, of Denmark Hill, Camberwell, writes:—
"By adopting your treatment my anxiety and misery was over within twenty-four hours, although I had been daily taking pills and other things in vain. Half the quantity you sent proved effective, to my intense joy and surprise."
A sworn guarantee is enclosed with all testimonials and medicine, which is inexpensive, as one bottle at 4s. 6d. (by post, 4s. 9d.) is usually sufficient for any case.
Full particulars will be gladly forwarded to any lady on receipt of addressed envelope.
Write privately to—
Mrs. P. S. S.,
145, STOCKWELL ROAD,
LONDON, S.W.

SEAMLESS

STOCKINET

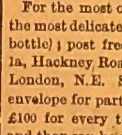
MADAME FRAIN'S FAMOUS FEMALE MIXTURE.

The most powerful and effective on earth.

For the most obstinate cases. Will not injure the most delicate. Price 7s. 6d. (Strongest, 11s. per bottle); post free, 6d. extra. HERBAL INSTITUTE, 1a, Hackney Road (opposite Shoreditch Church), London, N.E. Send at once stamped directed envelope for particulars and proofs. I will forfeit £100 for every testimonial that is not genuine, and they can be seen at any time.

Sold also by all Chemists.

INDIA RUBBER STAMPS.



For heading Notepaper, endorsing Envelopes, Cheques, and Postal arts Marking inen, etc. Monograms two etters 1s. each; three letters, 1s. 6d. each, full name in neat type 1s 4d each. Postage, 3d. Self-inkers, from 2s. each.

Pattern and Price Lists post free. Stamps are on brass mounts with black handles.

JOHN BERKLEY,
8, Livery Street, Birmingham.

Adresse de M. SUEZ, 9, Rue de Prony, PARIS

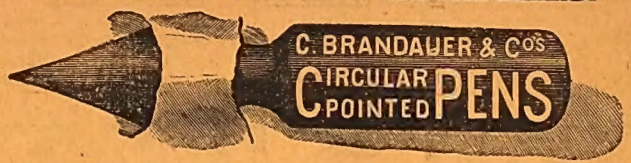
VINAIGRE LACTÉ de SUEZ POUR LA TOILETTE

EAU de SUEZ
VACCINE for the MOUTH
Strengthens the Gums
Perfumes the Breath
The only Dentifrice securing
BEAUTIFUL TEETH

POUDRE et PATE DENTIFRICES DE SUEZ

London Agents: WILCOX & Co., 239, Oxford Street.

SEVEN PRIZE MEDALS.



These series of pens neither scratch nor spurt. They glide over the roughest paper with the ease of a soft lead pencil. A **6d.** assorted sample box of any stationer.

TO SMOKERS.

As a temporary Advertisement to induce a trial of "Mosque," we will send you a Novelty Pipe, Rubber Tobacco Pouch, a Turkish Amulet, and Three Ounces of Ismael's Exquisite "Mosque" Smoking Mixture for Twelve Stamps.

Address P 15,
EUREKA MANUFACTURING COMPANY,
CLAPTON, LONDON, N.E.

TO WOMEN.

IRREGULARITIES OBSTRUCTIONS, &c., removed by an ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN Method WITHOUT MEDICINE. No Pills, Mixtures, or Useless Injections. *Greatest Discovery of Modern Medical Science.* Send stamped envelope for particulars, testimonials, &c., to Mrs. SHAFFER-BENNYON, 328, High Holborn, London, W.C.

NEW HARRISON SWIFT GOLD MEDAL

KNITTER

KNITS STOCKINGS (ribbed or plain) GLOVES and CLOTHING in WOOL, SILK, or COTTON. INSTRUCTIONS FREE. Lists free per post. TRIUMPHANT AWARD at PARIS. The only WINNER in the WORLD of 7 GOLD MEDALS and 19 other Honours. HARRISON KNITTING MACHINE CO., Ltd., Works: 48, Upper Brook St., Manchester.

Exema

and all Skin Eruptions are cured by a Healing Cream widely known as

"Antexema."

"Antexema" is sold by all Chemists and Stores and may be had post free for 1s. 8d., 2s. 9d., and 4s. 9d. of the ANTEXEMA Co., 83, Castle Road, London, N.W.

Little Book Free. NAME THIS PAPER.

BORD'S PIANOS

ON SALE, with 25 per cent. Discount for Cash, or 14s. 6d. per month (Second-hand 10s. 6d. per month) on the three years' system.—Lists Free of C. STILES and CO., 40 and 42, Southampton-row, Holborn, London. Pianos Exchanged.

ONE BOX OF
DR. MACKENZIE'S IMPROVED HARMLESS ARSENIC WAFERS
will produce the most lovely complexion that the imagination could desire. Clear, Fresh, freed from Blotch, Blemish, Coarseness, Redness, Freckles, or Pimples. Sent post free 4s. 6d.
To whiten the hands and skin, use
Dr. Mackenzie's Arsenical Toilet Soap.
1s. per tablet, 3 for 2s. 6d. Postage, 3d.
S. HARVEY, 12, Gaskarth Road, Balham Hill, London, S.W. *Beware of injurious imitations.*

IMPORTANT TO LADIES. Valuable and never failing remedies for all irregularities and obstructions, however obstinate or long standing, and never fails to bring about the desired result. These really wonderful medicines are without parallel in medical science: they preserve health, and have saved thousands trouble, illness, and expense; heaps of unsolicited testimonials. Send at once stamped envelope for most invaluable particulars. (The only effectual remedy on earth.)

A. DASMAIL
52, LANGDALE, WALTHAMSTOW.
(*Established* 1851.)

MUCH BETTER THAN STEEL AND PENNYROYAL.
OTTEY'S Unlabelled strong FEMALE PILLS Quickly and Certainly remove all obstructions arising from any cause whatever. Invaluable for married women. Post free, under cover, for 14 and 33 stamps, from—
THOMAS OTTEY, Chemist, Burton-on-Trent.
Please mention this paper.

TOWLE'S PENNYROYAL & STEEL PILLS FOR FEMALES.
QUICKLY CORRECT ALL IRREGULARITIES, REMOVE ALL OBSTRUCTIONS and RELIEVE the distressing SYMPTOMS so prevalent with the sex. Boxes 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. (the latter size contains three times the quantity), of all Chemists, or will be sent anywhere on receipt of 15 or 34 stamps, by the maker,
E. T. TOWLE, Chemist, NOTTINGHAM.
Beware of Imitations injurious and worthless.

A BOON TO LADIES

Collins' Marvellous Female Remedy.

Mr. COLLINS [who was 30 years a member of the Royal College of Surgeons of England], will forward free of Charge, full PARTICULARS of a REMEDY, which during an extensive practice both at home and in the Colonies he has never known to fail in the most OBSTINATE CASES of OBSTRUCTION and IRREGULARITIES. Send addressed envelope for full particulars, and waste no more time and money on useless Pills and so-called Remedies, &c., which, in the majority of cases, are nothing but PURGATIVES, and cause SICKNESS, PROSTRATION, and PAIN, without having the desired effect.
Letters to be addressed—
D. COLLINS,
GOTHIC HOUSE, 9, ERSKINE STREET, LIVERPOOL.

TO ADVERTISERS

Wishing to reach families, a Test Advertisement in SHORT STORIES *will bring profitable results. Scale of charges as follows:—*

Front Page, £12 10s. per insertion
Back or Inside, £10 per insertion } *Less 5 per cent. for 13 times.*
Per Inch, 5s. per insertion ... } *,, 10 per cent. for 26 times.*

BREAKFAST—SUPPER.

EPPS'S

GRATEFUL—COMFORTING.

COCOA

BOILING WATER OR MILK.

BLUSHING.

permanently cured. A pamphlet giving sound practical advice, and full particulars of a successful treatment for a rapid, simple, and inexpensive home-cure, forwarded free to all upon receipt of stamped addressed envelope.—Prof. F. W. HOLT, (Rooms O), Argyll Chambers, West Strand, London.

HAIR DESTROYED.

A lady who has permanently destroyed Superfluous Hairs on herself, will be happy to forward free, to all similarly afflicted, full particulars of a simple, inexpensive and harmless self-treatment. Send stamped addressed envelope in confidence to Mrs "T. D.," 87, Strand, London.

TOO STOUT.

IF you require a reliable remedy for the relief of Superfluous Fat, send for a box of my "H.D." Pills. No starvation required. You may eat and drink what you like, yet I guarantee to either sex a permanent reduction of 5 to 7 lbs. weekly. They are agreeable to take and harmless, being entirely of a vegetable preparation, are successful in the most stubborn cases, and never fail to improve both health and figure. Their action is rapid, certain, safe, and entirely free from inconvenience. They are pearl-coated and tasteless, and highly recommended by the Medical Profession. Price 2s. 9d., 4s. 6d. and 11s. Prof. F. A. HOLT, Argyll Chambers, West Strand, London.

ROSY CHEEKS

and a Lovely Complexion, clear as alabaster, immediately produced by one box of our ARSENIC AND IRON PILLS, no matter how pale or bad your complexion may be at present. Price per large box, post free 2s. 9d., from—

The LONDON TOILET COMPANY
190, Acre Lane, London, S.W.
Warranteed perfectly harmless and made from the Prescription of a most celebrated Physician.

To Tobacconists Commencing.

£20 See Illus. Guide. 259 pp. 3d. "How to open a Cigar Stores from £20 to £1,000." "TOBACCONISTS' CO.," 186, Euston Road, London. Manager — H. Myers. Estab. 1866. *N.B.*—Shopfitters and Show Case Makers for all trades.
ESTIMATES FREE.

TO LADIES.

English Wives should send at once for **Special Treatise and Price List of Surgical Appliances.** Advised by the Medical Faculty throughout the world. Apply, enclosing stamped addressed envelope.—**M. D., 217, Graham Road, London, N.E.** Please name this paper.

BALDNESS CURED in all its forms. Send stamped addressed envelope for Testimonials Press Criticism, and valuable Pamphlet, containing Chapters on Baldness, Loss of Hair, Greyness, Superfluous Hair &c., with Advice Form for Treatment, to Dr. HORN, Hair Specialist, Newport, Isle of Wight.

OLD POSTAGE STAMPS.

Wanted old collections and loose stamps. I will pay highest possible price for same. Look out your school-days' collection, or any old correspondence, and send same or particulars for my approval. Prompt cash settlements.—G. HAMILTON-SMITH, 28, Wallace Road, Canonbury, London.

NOSE A RADICAL PERMANENT CURE. Medically approved for Red Noses, 3/9 post free, under cover. Pamphlet "Red Noses, Cause and Prevention," 1/-. Machines for Ugly Noses. Particulars for stamp
LEES RAY, Specialist, Wavertree, Liverpool.

Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES.

EDITED BY C. ARTHUR PEARSON.

No. 323.] FOR THE WEEK ENDING MARCH 9, 1895. [PRICE ONE PENNY.

A NORTH COUNTRY THOROUGHBRED

PEOPLE were saying in the club house that Audrey looked like a fairy princess. They did not know that the girl was telling herself over and over again, how like it all was to a fairy tale. Barely a year back she had been a slim, shy, sun-burned creature, whose sole companions were books, horses, men.

Her home was in the grass country, among the hills of Cumberland. A rambling house set fair in the middle of three thousand undulating acres. It had sheltered only Peytons since the first of them came out of London to this northern world. A fine gentleman he, in powder, lace, ruffles, small clothes, and silk stockings. A horse, a woman, he swore, were the two things in life worth loving. As between them he was nobly impartial. His descendants for the most gave preference to the horse.

Necessarily, they loved also their land, and took pride in the knowledge that no Peyton had ever parted with an acre of the original property. Of course, it went always to the male heir. Audrey had known since she knew anything that, some day, her cousin Jack would reign in her father's stead.

But the knowledge gave her no concern. She was happy as the birds, the flowers are, in life and sunshine. Motherless from birth, if she missed the mother's tenderness, she missed also the brooding prescience in whose agony mothers often shadow lives far dearer than their own. Audrey did not like the ladies in the neighbourhood—their eyes were not kind, she decided. Besides, more than once she had caught whispers of "tomboy," "little wildcat," "burnt black as a nigger almost" as she walked with her stateliest step, and head in air up the long church aisle. Possibly that was why she refused utterly to be sent to school.

"We've got a whole roomful of books. I can learn more at home than they will teach me," she said to her father, when the matter came up.

"But will you?" he asked. "Remember, it's word of honour."

"Indeed I will—word of honour," Audrey said,—and there it ended.

No doubt it was a hazardous experiment—this giving a girl-child free range of books chosen strictly for masculine taste. But it wrought good only. In her white innocence Audrey took to her soul only what was wholesome and uplifting. She had inborn a fibre of heroism that made her as responsible to the impulse of great deeds, great thoughts, as is a summer lake to ruffling winds of June. Besides, she lived so in the open—had long gallops with the dawn-wind in her face,—through a world-steeping dew; walks over mile-long grass-fields to bathe in the creek's still pools; hours of sunny loitering with the birds, the bees, the butterflies; more than all, whole days in the pastures, where mother and foal alike knew and answered to her call.

Beyond all that, good comradeship with men—her father, Jack, the friends who dropped in to dine or sup—now and again in the autumn some stranger, who stayed in for a week of quail shooting. To a man they were fond of the bright-faced creature who sat at table in her mother's place, saying little, hearing much, with a fine small dignity of her own that forced them always to speak of her as "Miss Audrey Peyton" rather than "Peyton's little girl."

So the girl came to sixteen. Something happened then.

All Rights Reserved.

Digitized by Google

"I was never so delighted in my life."

She was told—what all her world had long known—that Jack loved her—and asked would she marry him? Not at once, of course, but in a year or two—when she was eighteen, perhaps—unless—unless—well! unless she could, may be, be willing to say seventeen.

Audrey looked at him, breathing hard. He was tall, handsome, the truest soul alive. And she had loved him all her life—but not in this way. Dimly, faintly, she felt the lack—but how refuse what his heart was set on? What she knew now had been for years her father's cherished hope. It was a cold, small hand that she laid within his palm. When he made as if to kiss her, she drew away with a little shiver—but Jack was well content. It soothed and suited his pride to have her stand at guard even against the man who was her promised husband.

Then for a year life went on in quite the old groove, save that now and then Jack lingered at Audrey's side ten minutes longer than was his wont. But he rarely spoke of his love, of their united future. So rarely, indeed, that but for the ring upon her finger, Audrey might almost have fancied the betrothal scene a dream. Now and again her father said, looking away from her as he spoke, "You are fortunate, singularly fortunate, Audrey, in—in your prospects of future happiness. The man who has chosen you is one of a thousand. Never forget that, whatever happens."

Certainly, Jack showed himself a friend as well as a lover. Particularly when the letter came that began the fairy tale. It was from her mother's rich sister, wife of a London millionaire, who, having married off her own two daughters early and brilliantly, suddenly bethought her that she "really must do something for that girl of poor Lucy's"—a creature towards whom her sense of kinship had hitherto been expressed wholly in Christmas cards.

Major Peyton resented them so much that he was for keeping silence when the lady, Mrs. Archibald Wayre, wrote, begging that her niece might come to her for a year's visit. Jack had a different mind. "Let her go," he said. "A Peyton can be trusted anywhere. She needs to see the world. Besides——" Only to himself would he say that he wished her to see other men—listen, it might be, to other lovers—since only thus could he be honourably quit of the charge his conscience had so often keenly preferred against him—namely, that he had taken advantage of his position—given her no liberty of choice.

So it came about that Mrs. Wayre, uneasily expectant of a gauche, red-cheeked, bouncing lass, found herself, upon a bright autumn morning, facing a lithe creature half a head higher than herself, who looked about her with a pretty rural bewilderment at London sights and sounds, but was no whit abashed by her magnificent kinswoman or the long, searching glance that swept her from head to foot. She even smiled a little, saying at last:

"Aunt Flora, Jack bade me tell you I was sure to be a certain disappointment. He knew I was not more than half as awkward as you would expect to find me."

"Jack was impertinent," Mrs. Wayre said, knitting her brows. "I remember him—a horrid boy—you know I came down when your mother died—but you! my dear! I was never so delighted in my life. Where did you get that air?—that turn of the head; that lift of arm as though a branch swayed by the wind. You are a princess masquerading in tan and freckles. Luckily, they are the fashion now. When I think what a career of conquest lies before you I really tremble at my responsibility."

Mrs. Wayre was wise in her generation. She did not overestimate the charm of wholesome girlish beauty with a white soul shining through. The winter was one long triumph. Audrey was a positive rage with the very best people, particularly the best parties. If the girl had been eager for conquest a score of hearts would have been laid at her feet before Lent brought quiet. As it was, she had but three refusals upon her conscience. Over each her aunt had smiled approval, though each meant a settlement in life such as, before her niece came, she could not have hoped to have her make.

But then she did not dream—as indeed how should she—? that the Hon. Arthur Cecil was not wholly invulnerable. Ten years or more he had been the hopeful despair of all that segment of society which had upon its conscience the establishment of a marriageable young woman.

For he had great possessions, as became the bearer of a fine old Sussex name, and was, besides, the soul of honour and of manly simplicity. A fellow of infinite nerve as well, else how could he calmly smile to naught the dainty lines, the pretty wiles spread all beside his path, especially without ever betraying the faintest consciousness of their existence?

Audrey had "made friends" with him upon the instant.

"My life against one word from your lips."

Digitized by Google

There was a fibre of sincerity in each soul that called at once to the other. To her aunt she had said, frankly "I like him better—a hundred times—than all the rest." And the good aunt had but smiled and looked wise, too wise to taint by a worldly word the talisman of unconsciousness by which she felt her niece must win a way into this so-long guarded heart.

It was such a triumph—one she had never dreamed of. She sighed almost at the thought that the victor was not her own child. A niece, though, was very near—and to think at first she had been so absurdly uneasy about Jack—Jack, who seldom wrote, and said hardly more than "Cheque inclosed; be sure you let us know before you need more money."

No doubt Jack was a good fellow enough—valuable squire, picturesque even—in Westmoreland. So long as he stayed there, a good many hundred miles away, Mrs. Wayre could think of him with a truly amiable complaisance. If her niece's mind strayed ever in the same direction nobody was the wiser for it—least of all the Hon. Cecil, albeit he flattered himself that to him her heart was as an open book, on each page whereof he read some fresh and delightful thing.

Thinking of Jack, Audrey had told herself that his love could not be deep—always she had had a sort of haunting fear that the betrothal was only a convenient family arrangement in which his heart was no more seriously engaged than hers. So long as the Hon. Cecil kept silence she could do nothing but be happy. If—if ever there was need, Jack should know all the truth. She knew he would bid her choose whatever was for her best happiness. Dear old Jack! It might be for his happiness as well.

But upon this white-hot August day, Audrey throned in the secretary's box in the grand stand, was drawn away from thought of what lay behind, before her, by vivid joy in the present. A figure of delicate stateliness, with everywhere a faint suggestion of roses, what wonder that she held a little laughing court, wherein distinctly the best men of the assemblage bent reverently to do her homage. Besides, it was all so new—her first vista into the ultimate destiny of the brave creatures she loved so well. They had driven the dozen miles betwixt the course and Belpré, the Wayre's country house, and Cecil, who was a member of the Jockey Club, had now taken command. The Quorn Plate, which was worth £5,000, was the principal event of the day. Of course, the entries had been phenomenally numerous. Equally, of course, the tragic march of time and training had left just two-year-olds to face the starting flag.

"Ten too many, at the very least," the Secretary said in Audrey's ear, as far down the course the grand parade began to form. Audrey looked away from him over the club-house lawn, with its brave show of turf and blossoms, the magnificent wide-sweeping course, to the trees outside, whereon ragged, adventurous lads sat thick as blackbirds, then back to the rank upon rank of heads in the big, breezy stand, and said reflectively:

"I don't know about that. Most of them have no ghost of a chance to win—but only a few here know that. If there were but three or four creatures to carry the hopes, fears, fortunes of this multitude, do you not think the feeling would be too tense for enjoyment?"

"Perhaps," the grey beard admitted. "But, see—there they come."

Audrey gave a low, delighted cry. They were coming—those young racers, finer than silk, stepping slow and stately, yet with motion so supple as to show their feet could spurn the wind. Four or five were chestnut coats, as many bay and sorrel—two brown, two greys; a single shining black made up the tale of fire and muscle, passing slow in review under the eyes of the massed throng.

"Let me introduce you to my cousin."

The black colt rider wore a thin gold sash across the chest. The pair came almost last, and were evidently unknown and friendless. Other steeds, other riders, had got hand-clappings, plenty—joyous shouts of welcome. These two passed along in a waft of heavy silence.

"Pick the winner, Miss Peyton. I hear you know all that is to be known about horses," the Secretary said, smiling down at Audrey. As she bent her glass critically on the vanishing paraders, he added:

"I will tell you, though, the race lies between three—Northman, the bay colt, who came first, and is the rankest outsider in the betting; Raveloe, the chestnut, an odds-on favourite; and Victor, the sorrel with white stockings."

Audrey shook her head. "It will be none of them, if the best horse wins; for the best of all is the black who came last. Let's see his name—Chance! Who ever heard such a one? He moves as if he were made of lightning and velvet. With anything like fair play he must surely win."

"You must back your judgment," Cecil said, very low. "And let me name the wager: my life against one word from your lips."

Audrey did not answer him in words, but as she turned from him there were damask roses a-blossom in her sweet face. All eyes were now bent on the farther end of the straight course, where twenty impatient creatures, each bearing a rider whose face was hard-set almost to wolfishness, were plunging, rearing, lashing out wildly with the heel, nipping savagely one at the other, yet each one wildly eager to dash foremost across the three-quarters of a mile now betwixt his owner and fortune.

Once, twice, thrice they formed, broke away, with still some laggard to make the effort vain. A breathless hush fell on the waiting throng; half-words died upon the lip; hands were arrested in mid-air. As the roar of the sea, but tensely human, at last came the shout, "They're off—off!" Before

Digitized by Google

it could die away the rataplan of flying hoofs swelled electrically upon thrilled, expectant ears. As one soul, the crowd caught its breath, then got to its feet, bent forward, as though to draw, by the might of its burning desire, the racers yet the swifter to their golden goal.

It was an even start. For the first hundred yards the young things kept the order of troop horses. Then Victor's white stockings flashed out of the rank. Northman was at his shoulder, Raveloe's nose at the crupper. A wink of the eyelash, and he came abreast. Stride for stride, with glaring eyeballs, with nostrils wide and red, ears laid close along the neck, the brave creatures came over the sunlit space, swifter than the swallow's flight.

"Raveloe! Raveloe! Northman! No! Victor! Victor! Raveloe! Raveloe wins!" came up from the throng over a babel of shouting. They were close—so close now. With a glass it was easy to note the lined, hollow faces of the jockeys, bent so low, so fiercely over their horses' necks. Audrey's hand closed hard upon Arthur Cecil's arm.

"Look! look! The black horse!" she cried. "See! They have him pocketed! Oh, it is cruel—cruel! Why will the rest not give him room? I know he could win. Ah! there he comes at last!"

He came—like the whirlwind—the tempest's driving wrath. Only an eighth remained—the flying leaders, running neck and neck, had a hundred and fifty yards to the post. The noise sank—shouts died in the throat—with bated breath, the throng watched the electric speed, the wide space-devouring bounds that brought the black nearer, ever nearer to his more fortunate foes. Nearer, ever nearer.

Fifty yards from the post the dust of the leaders swallowed him—his nose came through it—his head, his shoulders. Locked with the first flight, running as a team, the face went past the post, the black muzzle a bare six inches behind Victor's white face, which, in turn, just showed in front of Raveloe and Northman.

"You are a witch for guessing—or a marvellous judge of horseflesh," the Secretary said, as bedlam broke loose about them. "On my soul, though, I'm sorry for the fellow who owns that black. He must have won had the run been five yards longer. It's years since I saw a beast of such quality. I must find out all about him and his owner."

"I can tell you the whole story," said an aristocratic-looking man in the next box. "As you say, it's a beastly shame. The boy rode to perfection—but he's new to the business, and did not know how to look out for himself. The whole outfit—owner, horse, and jockey—came from the North. The man, it seems, is a breeder with a big place there—but somehow he has run behind, so far as to have a big mortgage on his hands. In addition, he's engaged to marry a pretty girl for whom he thinks nothing is quite fine or good enough. So a year ago, instead of selling this black wonder, who is royally bred, and would have fetched a tidy sum, he decided to keep and train him, hoping to pull off the Horn of Plenty and live happy ever after. As you see, he has just missed it; and so confident was he of winning that he wagered the horse on the result of the race."

A tall man, wedging himself out of the throng behind them, caught Audrey's eye, as he moved away. Instantly she sprang to his side, crying aloud, "Jack! Jack! You must not go away and leave me."

As with the illumination of a lightning flash she comprehended—he was the man who had risked and lost for love. After one glance at his working face, she put both hands fast over his arm, and turned to face the Hon. Arthur Cecil, saying, with a touch of shy pride, "Mr. Cecil, let me introduce you to Mr. Peyton, who is my cousin, and is to be my husband as soon as I go home."

At her words a flame of joy lit Jack's face for a breath's space, then faded, leaving it hollowed in tenser new lines. He laid a caressing palm on the soft hands holding him, and said, looking full in Cecil's eyes:—"That was the—plan, sir—and—and you see a Peyton never goes back on—anybody in trouble. But I've known this face by heart for years and years—I—I saw it sitting back there when—when you made your wager—and knew before the race was run I was in the way of losing—to-day."

Speech was beyond the lovers. In silence Cecil took Audrey's hand that Jack laid tenderly within his own. Mrs. Wayre looked uncertain whether to scream or faint over such happenings in public. The Secretary of the Jockey Club came forward and caught Jack's hand. Wringing it hard, he said with suspicious huskiness: "Mr. Peyton, I thank you—you have widened my experience. It has been—a most unfortunate day for you—but in spite of all, I must thank you for showing me, and so many others, that in quality the North Country thoroughbred stands ahead of the world."

THE GOLDSMITH OF ANTWERP.

A BELGIAN STORY.

It was the beginning of the sixteenth century. A wonderfully fine Sunday morning in winter had dawned; the clear, cold sun was sparkling on the snow-covered roofs of Antwerp. The sunbeams climbed and glided merrily along the houses, gilding the stained glass window panes. Then they jumped gleefully over to the smooth fields of ice formed by the frozen canals which encircle the city.

At the north end of the town, a small, well-frozen lake had been formed by the outlets of the smaller canals. Church was just over; the last sounds of the bells were still trembling on the crisp air as they died away. A merry throng was on the lake; a delightful picture of youthful gaiety presented itself to the visitor. The slender forms of youths and maidens, with their glittering skates, seemed to skim along as if driven by the wind. Two by two the elder ones skated by, followed by boys and girls, forming long chains.

Every now and then a pretty girl swept by all the other skaters, who bowed to her respectfully and watched her with admiration. But, like a proud swan, she went on farther and farther. Her magnificent dress betrayed the wealthy patrician. A blue velvet gown, falling in rich folds, and trimmed with fine fur, enveloped her form; and under the turban which she wore, and which was trimmed with flowing red plumes, gleamed a mass of golden hair, which fell in two heavy braids to the edge of her gown. The wonderful, dreamy eyes in her beautiful, aristocratic face often looked searchingly among the young patricians, but only to turn away in disappointment and with intense longing

Digitized by Google

Finally the form of a young man, coming rom the other end of the lake, came gliding towards the pretty skater. Her eyes sparkled with joy; he bowed to her reverently; but then he confidently grasped the little hands which she stretched towards him. They glided on in silence for some time.

"Why did you remain all alone, Antje?" he asked suddenly; "the young patricians will think it haughtiness on your part."

Antje drew up her rosy lips in scorn.

"That just suits me, cousin Adrian!" she laughed. "I wanted to wait for you undisturbed!"

"Oh, Antje, you must not do it! As grateful as your cousin is to you for your friendship, you must never forget what a deep, immeasurable abyss separates the wealthy Anna Der Solst from the poor goldsmith, Adrian Van Benschotten!" The handsome man spoke earnestly and mildly.

"Oh!" pouted Antje, "but suppose I do not like anyone else as well as poor Adrian?" and with a proud, loving look she scanned his noble, stalwart form in its plain brown doublet.

"Adrian! do you know whom you resemble—in comparison with the gaudy patricians? You are like the falcon among the bullfinches."

"Sweet child, it is well that you can jest; I feel as if I should like to die—for I come to you to-day for the last time—to bid you farewell—I am going to England."

"Go," she said icily. She pushed him from her, but only to draw herself up again, closer and more confidingly to him. It seemed as if they were made one for the other, for they were the most distinguished-looking couple among the crowd of young people.

"You see, Antje—I must go, hard as it is for me to do so. My honour demands it. It is my duty. Shall I notice, Antje, how my little cousin's affection grows stronger, day by day? And to know that we may never come together. It is better that I should go while my Antje is still young, so that she may more easily forget the poor goldsmith. You will know and love a better man, but I shall remain true to my first love."

"Adrian! I shall never love any one else but you!"

"Poor Antje! It is in vain; the proud Mynheer Van Solst will never give his only child to a poor apprentice in marriage——"

"You are an artist, Adrian," Antje answered vivaciously. "Even to-day I will be the wooer for you at my father's feet."

Adrian shook his head. "You don't understand Mynheer's patrician pride." He tore himself away violently. "Farewell, Antje."

"Soon I will send you good news!" Antje called after him.

He smiled sadly, waved one final farewell and disappeared.

. . . . . .

The finest house on the Schelde quay belonged to Mynheer Van Der Solst.

A stately repose reigned in the reception hall, covered with rugs and decorated with large chests, mirrors, weapons and shields, which led to a suite of richly furnished apartments. The last one was Antje's own, a charming and dainty room.

Rare tropical plants adorned it. Costly silver covered the toilet table. Heavy red silk draperies fell from the golden crown of the tester of her bed. Gobelin tapestries from Brabant showed scenes from the Bible. In the midst of this splendour Antje sat, in the cosy, upholstered bay window, and gazed sadly upon the dead winter landscape. Her eyes were red from weeping; now and then a soft sob escaped her half-opened lips. There had been a terrible scene. Mynheer—her father, who had always been so kind and lenient—now swore high and low that only a wealthy merchant should become the husband of his only daughter. "I will never give you to that poor beggar!" were his last words.

It was not on account of the difference in rank, for the goldsmith's art was greatly honoured in the sixteenth century, but Mynheer considered Adrian an idle dreamer.

"Profession has no golden bottom with that fellow!" grumbled the excited man. "I shall never intrust my greatest blessing to a man who will never be prosperous!"

Time crept on slowly and weighed heavily on Antje; finally she found some diversion in her embroidery frame. The beautiful lace collar upon which she was at work had been intended for a bridal gift for Adrian.

"Now the collar shall ornament my shroud!" thought Antje, and gave way to sombre thoughts. She did not even notice that she had pricked her middle finger, until the drops of blood from it already made a large spot. The fine Brussels cambric was spoiled. Antje angrily threw the frame into a corner. Just then Greta, her maid, entered, and handed Antje a small package bearing Adrian's handwriting.

Quickly Antje opened the seal; a small silver article, set with a blue stone, fell out and rolled down at Antje's feet. Inquisitively Antje picked it up, and looked at the strange trinket in astonishment; then put it down indifferently, took up the parchment, and read:

"MY DEAR, SWEET ANTJE,—I know very well that you would not send me a good message. Now I am on my way to England. Believe me, I act only from motives of pure, disinterested love. But you, my dear child, must obey your noble father, who is anxious for your welfare only.

"Farewell, my darling! Be happy, and try to forget,

"Ever your loving,

"ADRIAN.

"P.S.—Perhaps I may give you just a little souvenir! The silver trinket is a little cap which I thought of for the protection of your delicate finger, when I noticed how often you pricked it at your embroidery."

Then Antje alternately pressed the letter and the little finger-cap to her lips, and held up her hand as she made the vow: "Adrian, I will wait until you return to take your Antje with you!"

. . . . . .

Three years have passed; a long magnificent wedding procession is moving to the grand Jacob's Cathedral, at Antwerp.

The pretty bride, who smiles so happily under her veil, is Antje Van Der Solst. She has not lost any of the freshness of youth, but has blossomed out even more beautiful and queenly, a full-blown, fragrant rose. The bridegroom is a wealthy, stately-looking man from Sheffield. He looks his best in his costly velvet waistcoat, decorated with a wide golden necklace of honour—altogether a distinguished figure among the patricians following the bridal pair.

Antje is following the man from Sheffield to the altar, with her father's blessing—and still she has kept her vow, for the bridegroom is Adrian Van Benschotten the inventor of the thimble.

The practical Englishmen had soon appreciated the value of the invention, and through it Adrian had attained riches and honours.

THREE SMART SIXPENNIES.

"The Matmaison Mystery."

No. 6 of PEARSON'S LIBRARY.

A COMPLETE NOVEL, WITH OVER 100 ILLUSTRATIONS.

FOOTLIGHT FAVOURITES.

No. 5 on Sale March 6th.

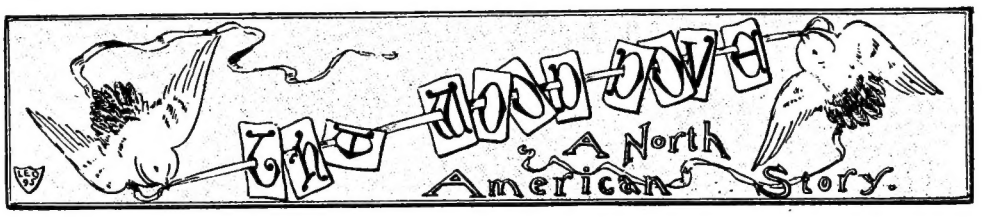
THE CENTRE PAGE DESIGN ALONE IS WORTH THE MONEY.

PANTOMIME FAVOURITES

No. 2 Now on Sale.

WITH DOUBLE-PAGE PLATE.

Digitized by Google



My friend Max, Mr. R. Max of New York, was a capital story-teller. He had been on the stage at one time, which accounted for the gift. One night we had gone to the Empire together, and sitting there in the stalls he began like this, for all the world as if he were reading from the programme in his hand:—

General court-martial had been proclaimed at Fort Marcy. It had convened. Private Thomas Wilkins of Company D, —th infantry, had been tried for being off duty without leave; the papers had been signed and sent to Washington by the afternoon mail, and Colonel John Brierly, who had acted as judge-advocate, and Major Thompson, the surgeon, who had appeared as a witness against Wilkins, were striding along the broad walk towards the colonel's quarters when I met them, and was invited to have a glass of something hot.

After the something hot had been declared excellent by all the persons interested, the talk naturally was of the court-martial.

"By the way, colonel," said Major Thompson, "if you will pardon my saying so, I thought you were very lenient towards Wilkins in your examination."

"Yes," said the colonel, "I generally am in such cases. You know," he said, turning to me, "Wilkins left his quarters to go and see his sweetheart. He is engaged to the girl."

"But it was a clear case of neglect of duty," remarked the surgeon.

"I know it," replied the colonel, "but—well, I sympathise with him."

The major said nothing more. The colonel regarded his glass for a few moments, tested the punch, and then, looking up suddenly, he said:

"I'll tell you what I'll do. If you men will give me your word of honour never to reveal to a soul what I have to tell until I am dead and gone, I will give you my reasons for sympathising with this man."

We gave him our word of honour, and we kept our word. The colonel has now been dead for many years; the major, I believe, is on the retired list, and living somewhere up in Maine; and I do not feel that I am wronging any man in repeating the story told to us that winter afternoon some ten or twelve years ago.

"In the little old churchyard on the outskirts of the Mexican village of San Felipe in Arizona," the colonel said, "is a grave standing by itself in one corner. On the modest head-stone is the inscription, 'Sacred to the memory of the Wood Dove, received into the Church as Mercedes Brierly, wife of Colonel John Brierly, U.S.A., died on March 10th, 187—, aged 26 years.'"

The colonel was silent for some moments, and then, in a grave voice, he continued:

"Mercedes Brierly was my wife. I am the John Brierly referred to. She was an Apache Indian, and when you have heard what I did to win her hand, knowing her heart was mine, you will understand why I did not put many severe questions to that poor young man to-day.

"I first met the girl who was destined to be my wife in the year 186—, when I was stationed on the frontier. The civil war, in which I had won my colonel's commission, was but over, and the Apache and other Indians were constantly on the warpath. I was at that time in command of the —th of cavalry, and I had about 400 men with me.

"We were encamped near a little Mexican village, San something or other, in the north-western part of New Mexico.

"We had no work to do for about a month, but the air of my tent was heavy with the reports brought to me of a large body of Apaches said to be on the war-path, and rapidly approaching our neighbourhood.

"One afternoon—I remember the day well—the reports were verified by the capture of an Apache girl by some of the men. The girl was brought to my tent by her captors. They had found her riding by herself in the hills, and had only succeeded in making her a prisoner after she had severely wounded one of them.

"I will not attempt to describe the beauty of this girl. She was then about nineteen years of age, of sublime figure, with the most wonderfully beautiful eyes. I will only say that I fell in love with her the very moment I saw her.

"We held the girl a prisoner. She refused to tell us anything about herself or to betray the whereabouts of her people. That they were near we knew, however; and daily and nightly we expected an attack. But for one month they remained under cover. We did not go out and look for them, as it was my policy always to let them fire the first shot.

"That month was, in many respects, the happiest month of my life. Love was new to me, and I loved this girl with all my heart. What was sweeter, she soon grew to love me in return.

"One day I told her of my love, and I asked her to marry me. I left her, and that night the Apaches attacked us. Their victory was complete. They found us unprepared. Our loss was something fearful, and my loss was greater still, for when the morning came the girl was missing. Her people had recaptured her.

"The morning found us in a desperate mood. The men were mad and I was mad. We were all in a humour for a first class massacre, and I laid my plans accordingly. Our scouts discovered where the enemy's forces lay, and that afternoon we penned them in and had them at our mercy. Our numbers were about even, but our men were all old soldiers, thoroughly disciplined, and so they fell easy victims to our superiority.

"At about five o'clock, when the fighting was at its worst, I showed a flag of truce, and a few moments later an Indian of commanding stature rode out from the little fort they had built on top of the hill and advanced to the centre of the diminutive plain which stretched between the two armies. I rode out alone to meet him, for I could see that he was the chief of the tribe.

"We saluted.

"'I offer you peace,' I said to him, 'on two conditions; first, that you lay down your arms and surrender; second, that the girl you stole from us last night be returned to me.'

"'She is my daughter,' said the Indian haughtily.

"'Then there is so much more reason why you should surrender, for I love her; I would marry her, and I do not wish to be at war with her people.'

"'You are good,' replied the Indian, with a sneer; the first and only time I have ever seen a sneer on the face of an Indian. 'You offer me peace for honour. Go back to your tents.'

"I felt as though he had kicked me, and, flaming up with wrath, I returned to my men and the Indian to his. But there was very little more work done that day. I determined to wait until the morning, and then to charge upon the enemy and kill every man of them, to capture my sweetheart and marry her, whether her father liked it or not. By that time, I considered, it wouldn't make much difference whether he liked it or not, for dead men rarely interfere in matters of love.

"I had no fear of their escaping during the night, for we

Digitized by Google

had them pretty well penned in, and I had no fear of their attacking us until morning. After sunset I called my officers together and gave them their orders.

"'At eight o'clock,' I told them, 'we will charge upon them and finish them up.'

"The officers left me in my tent to my own reflections, and a few minutes later I heard a slight cheer from the men. I knew then that they had heard the order, for all the afternoon they had been itching for a good charge. The command had not been given, for the simple reason that I feared in the charge upon the Indians the girl I loved might be either killed or wounded.

"I sat for a long time thinking how I might capture her, and, seeing no way clear, I was about to turn in in despair, when I heard a cry for the corporal of the guard from one of our outposts. There was a hurrying of men, and then, in a few moments, the corporal came into my tent, saluted, and said that an Indian girl wished to speak with me. My heart beat violently, and I ordered the men to show her in.

"But it was not my love, my Wood Dove, as she had told me her name was among her people. The girl who stood before me was small and wizened, with weak eyes and in rags.

"'What do you want?' I asked her.

"'The Wood Dove could not fly to you,' she replied, 'so she sent me. They are guarding her, but she will escape from them. She tells me to say to you that my people will charge upon you to-morrow morning, and that to deceive you all of our women will be mounted and held in the rear as if they were men waiting for their turn to fight. She tells me to say to you that she will be mounted on a black horse, with a star in its forehead, and with two white forelegs. She will be in the front line when the charge is made, and at the first fire will fall from her horse as though she were wounded. You must then manage to pick her body up before our people do so. Her father is the chief of our people; he was the chief with whom you spoke to-day, and he was very angry with her when he came back to us.

"'She has persuaded him that she does not love you, but hates you, and, though she is well guarded to-night, it is because of the fear of an attack from you. In the morning she will ride forth and take her place at the head of all the women. In the excitement of the moment she will be able to mix with the men, and you know what to do then.'

"The girl left me and returned, as she had come, to the tents of her people.

"I was naturally excited over this story. I could not help realising the real danger the Wood Dove would run of being killed, and I was puzzled for some while what I should do. Then an idea occurred to me, and, smiling to myself, I went to sleep and rested peacefully until the morning.

"In the morning I called my officers about me again.

"'I have learned,' I said, 'that the enemy intend to charge upon us. I have decided that it will be best to wait until they are halfway across the plain, and then to sally forth. The chief in command of them is the famous Deer Head, and my orders are to capture him alive, if possible. For this reason, I think it would be advisable to supply the men with one round of blank cartridges.

"'When the enemy is halfway across the plain I will give the order, and at the sound of the bugle we will sally forth. When within one hundred yards of the enemy the blank cartridges are to be fired. Then charge into them and take as many prisoners as possible. Only one round of blank cartridges is to be supplied, and no man is to fire after that until the bugler repeats the charge. I myself will take the centre. Captain Howard will take the left, and Captain Watkins the right. Now, gentlemen, to your posts.'

"I chuckled to myself, as, with astonishment depicted upon their faces, the young gentlemen left me, and then to complete my plans I summoned my body-guard. In those days a colonel on the frontier had as many in his body-guard as he wanted. My men were all good, loyal, brave fellows, and I knew that I could depend upon them.

"'My men,' I said to them, 'I am going to lead the centre this morning, and I'm going to put you all immediately behind me, in the front rank. I want you all to watch me closely, and I want you also to look out for a black horse, with white forelegs, and a white star in its forehead. If the rider of that horse falls at the first fire, or the second fire, or at all, I want you to be careful and follow me, and get to the body before it is picked up by any of the Indians.'

"My plans now complete, I had but to wait. I had not long to wait either, for within an hour the warriors came forth from under cover, and behind them came what looked like a second regiment, but what I knew to be the women. It is not often that the Indians, I should say here, take their women with them when they go on the warpath, but the Apaches, being a wandering tribe, generally had no safe place to leave them, and so were obliged to be hampered with their presence.

"The Indians advanced, and the bugle sounded the order to mount. I rode out to my place, and stationed my six body-guardsmen immediately behind me in the rank. For some time I could not make out the horse I looked for, but at last I saw it in the rearguard, and then, as the Indians galloped their horses, I saw it come out from among the women and take a place in the ranks of the men.

"The enemy came on now towards us at a brisk gallop, its line as straight as an arrow, and as I tightened my waistband I caught sight again of the horse with the white forelegs. It was in the very middle of the line. My joy was almost complete.

"The enemy was now in the middle of the plain, and the time had come for action. The bugle sounded and we were off, slowly and quietly loping over the ground at first; then, as the enemy came nearer, thundering over the parched earth. Within gunshot we came, and the Indians opened on us. A few of our men dropped, but we did not reply. On we thundered, and then a line of insipid, useless fire burst from our lines.

"I heard a cry. I saw a figure—the figure of the girl I loved. There was a rushing and a growling and a thundering of hoofs. We were among them, cutting to the right and left. We cut our way through them. I dashed forward to where my love lay waiting for me.

"I leaned forward over my horse, seized her in one hand, and lifted her, with a strength I knew not I possessed, and placed her in the saddle behind me. My bodyguard placed themselves in a circle round me, the bugle sounded the charge again, the signal to commence firing, and then, wheeling, we opened on them with sabre and carbine.

"Through their lines we went again, my guardsmen about me mowing a lane for me through the red men. And then, safe in our own territory once more, I gave my love into the safe keeping of my six faithful fellows, and they returned to our camp with her.

"You know the result of that battle. The fight lasted for only a few minutes, and then, beaten, half of their number dead, the great Deer Head killed, the enemy retreated in disorder.

"Without much ado my Indian girl and I were married at the little Mexican church in the village. For some few short years we were very happy, and then she was taken from me.

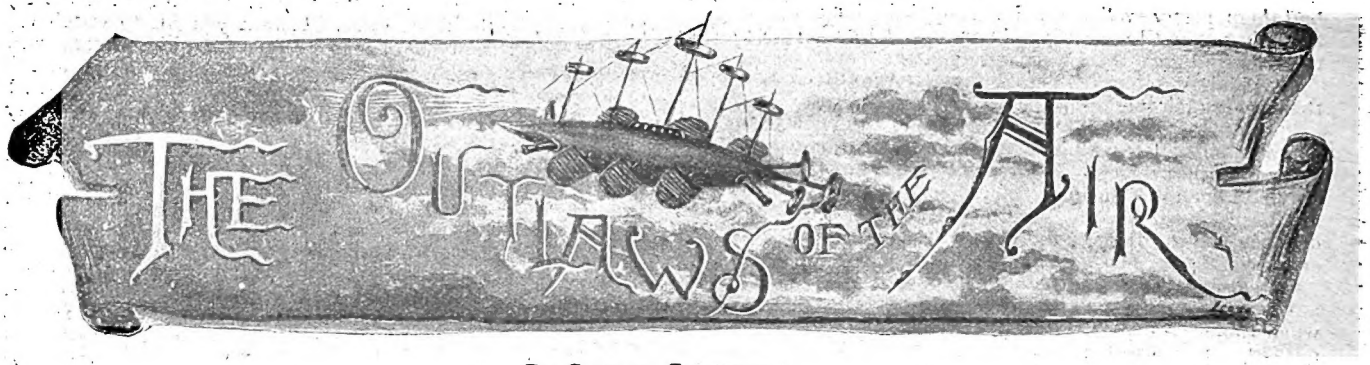
"Now that you know how great risks I took with the lives of my men for the sake of the woman I loved, do you blame me for sympathising with poor Wilkins? I was fortunate—he was unfortunate; that's the only difference. And, poor man, he really did nothing. He did not leave us at the mercy of a cruel foe. More than likely at the time we were comfortably drinking hot punch and telling stories. And I'll tell you what I am going to do, gentlemen. I am going to write to Washington to-night and give the man a first-rate character, and take the liberty of advising the department merely to reprimand him. What do you think?"

The major and I filled our glasses, and, raising them to our lips, exclaimed, in a voice, as we quaffed the cheerful beverage:

"Colonel, here's your very good health!"

Mr. R. Max of New York had finished. The call bell rang and the curtain rose on the latest London ballet.

Digitized by Google



By George Griffith,

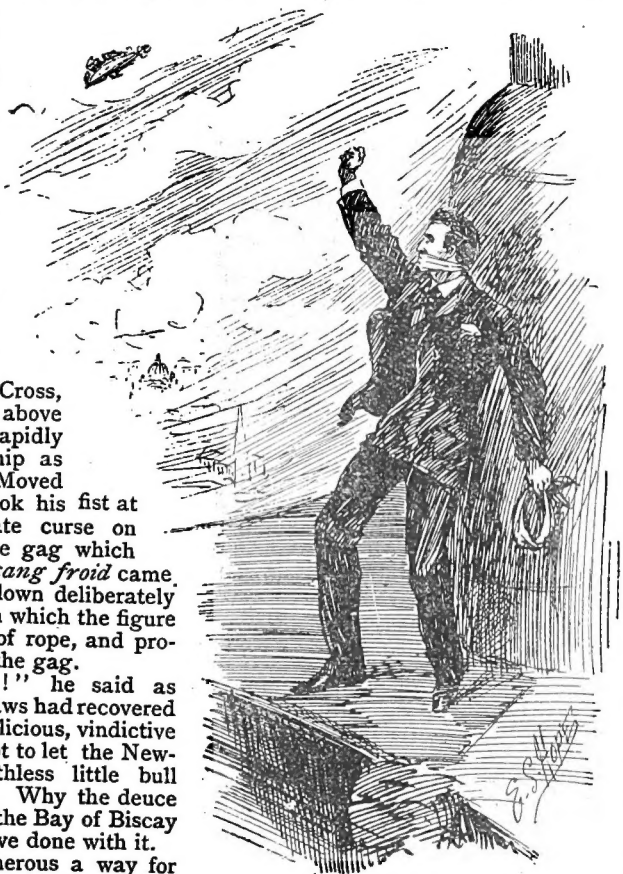
Author of "The Angel of the Revolution," "The Syren of the Skies," &c.

CHAPTER LI.

Game to the Last.

Renault's first action as soon as he had satisfied himself that his feet were resting on a solid foundation was to take the bandage from his eyes. Although he felt certain that such an enemy as Hartog would have taken very good care to leave him in a position from which no escape was possible without the intervention of a miracle, still, with that elementary instinct of self-preservation which, in such supreme moments rises superior to, and independent of, all reasoning, he lifted the bandage very slowly from his eyes for fear of being dazzled and dazed, and so losing his footing by some involuntary movement.

He looked out under it as he raised it, and the first glimpse showed him where he was. He was on the east-side of the capital, and therefore, facing Morley's Hotel and Charing Cross, and far away over the roofs above which he stood he could see the rapidly diminishing shape of the air-ship as she sped away into the clouds. Moved by an irresistible impulse, he shook his fist at it and mumbled an inarticulate curse on Hartog and her crew behind the gag which filled his mouth. Then his old *sang froid* came back to him, and he sat himself down deliberately with his back against the base on which the figure of Nelson stands beside the coil of rope, and proceeded to untie the fastenings of the gag.



He shook his fist.

"You treacherous little beast!" he said as soon as his stiffened tongue and jaws had recovered the faculty of speech. "You malicious, vindictive little cur! What an ass I was not to let the Newcastle people stretch that worthless little bull neck of yours as they wanted to! Why the deuce didn't you pitch me overboard in the Bay of Biscay as I intended to pitch you and have done with it.

"That would have been too generous a way for you to treat an enemy, I suppose, and yet, after all, I don't know—I must confess there's a sort of what the old dramatists used to call, 'poetic justice' about it. As you said, the good people of London had very good reason for wishing to see me again, and you've certainly put me in a fairly conspicuous position.

"Oh yes, I thought so; the audience is beginning to collect for the spectacle. Curious how times change and men change with them! The last time I was in this neighbourhood the people couldn't get out of the way fast enough. They seemed to look upon me as a sort of destroying pestilence, as I possibly was, and—curse that treacherous, sausage-eating little pig, and the curs that turned on me at the last moment!—if it hadn't been for them I should be that still, instead of playing an entirely new version of St. Simon Stylites on the top of Nelson's Column.

"Still, it is no use growling; the game is up, and if, as Byron says, the wolf dies in silence, a good Anarchist can meet his end with no less dignity I suppose. At any rate when the end does come I shall have the satisfaction of knowing that I have sent a good few thousands of my enemies to perdition before me. Yes, that was a glorious night when I left the heart of London burning behind me, and they won't have repaired those ruins down yonder at Westminster until a good time after they have settled accounts with me.

"Well now, I wonder how they are going to get me down. Obviously they must either fetch me down or shoot me up here unless I oblige them by jumping down. I don't see how they could fetch me, because I wouldn't go. There isn't a man in England plucky enough to climb up and fetch me down. I suppose they'd do that by flying a kite over the Column like they do over mill chimneys, and then hauling ropes and ladders up. Or perhaps they might build a scaffolding, only that would be too much trouble, I should think, especially as I might disappoint them by jumping off just as it was finished. It looks a nasty fall, and those stones look most uncompromisingly hard; but still, I should never feel the smash. According to all accounts big falls are rather pleasant experiences than otherwise.

"Ah, what has that policeman picked up down there? Looks like a bit of paper tied to something. I daresay it's a message that that little pig Hartog threw over to tell them I am here. Yes, that is evidently it. See how they're pointing up. Ah! you brutes, you think you've got me now, don't

Digitized by Google

you? And you are looking forward to another little scene in Newgate Yard which will not be interrupted by the appearance of an Anarchist air-ship; but I can promise you that that will never happen. You shall have something more tragic than that if you have anything.

"*Tonnerre!* what a crowd, and what a sea of stupid, gaping, up-turned faces! If I could only have command of the *Revanche* now for ten minutes they might burn me alive or break me on the wheel afterwards. Wouldn't I scatter them in fine style! And aren't they howling, too. It's a good job my aerial experiences have given me a steady head, or I might lose it and fall down. But, bah! what a fool I am! It will only be a few minutes or a few hours sooner, after all, and what would that matter?"

"Ah! a bullet. So you'd shoot me like a trapped wolf, would you, Messieurs? That was rather a bad shot. I think you have knocked a piece of Nelson's coat away. I don't care to be shot, because I might only be wounded; so I think I'll lie down for a bit. Yes, and I may as well have a smoke at the same time. There, that's better; now they can't see me, and I can have one more smoke in comfort, at any rate.

"I wonder what that little backguard Franz is going to do? And, *tonnerre de Dieu*, I never thought of that—I wonder whether poor Lea has remained faithful and remembered what I told her about the reserves of fuel? Yes, she must have done; she could never have joined those curs, and she's too clever and a good deal too spiteful not to have played that little trick upon them, and, if she has, what a gorgeous swindle it will be for Hartog and the rest!

"There isn't an ounce of the stuff in the Camp except what's on board the other ships—I took very good care of that; and the *Revanche* will only have about enough to travel a thousand miles with, and then—why, down she comes like a balloon with the gas let out; and when that happens I don't think I shall have very much cause to envy either Franz or any of them. They'll be drowned like so many rats in the sea, or, better still, they will have to drop on land, and then—if they don't get torn to pieces by wild animals—they'll give a little pleasant excitement to the whole of Europe, and then get strung up or shoved under the guillotine, to the applause of a most appreciative audience.

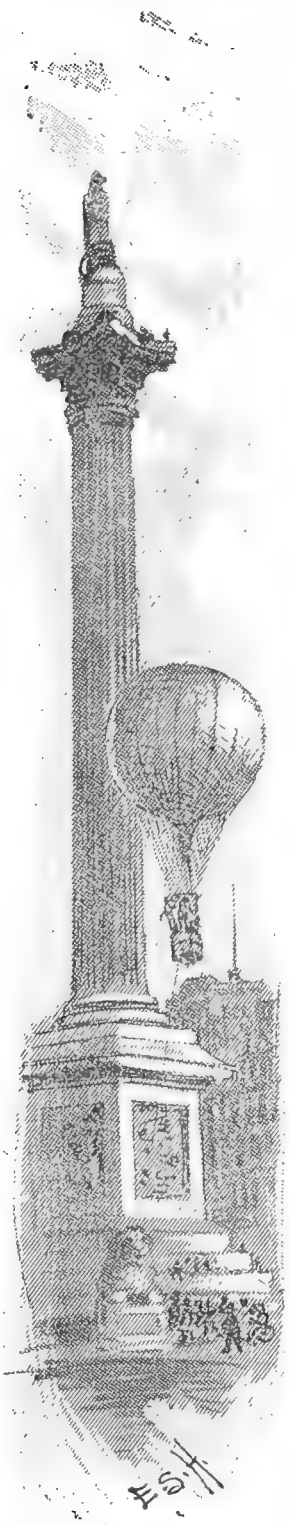
"Yes, that would be a very comforting thought in my present position if only poor Lea wasn't among them. It will be a miserable end for her to meet anyhow, and yet if I'd left her at the Camp it wouldn't have been much better, even if it hadn't been much worse. Ah, well! I can't save her now, though, if I could, and there was a ladder from here down into the middle of that gaping, yelling crowd, that's longing to tear me limb from limb, I'd willingly walk down if it would save her.

"Hullo! What's that they are bringing up Parliament Street from the Horse Guards? A captive military balloon, as I am still alive. So that is your little game is it, gentlemen? What a pity you haven't got one of the Syndicate's air-ships here to fetch me off. I think you'd find it rather more useful than that clumsy-looking thing.

"Yes, that's what it is; all right. There's the balloon, and there's the car and the cart with the windlass and rope. I suppose they've been practising with it in the Park. Really, that is quite a brilliant idea for the British War Office, but I'll give them something a bit more brilliant than that before they've finished the experiment.

"I wonder what sort of a fool they take me for. Let's see, have I got anything in the way of a weapon about me? Yes. I be hanged if they haven't left me my sheath knife. Good! Now, there won't be more than three men come up with it. I wonder if I could manage to despatch them and then cut the rope before they could wind it back to the earth. No! That won't do. They weave a couple of strands of wire now in those ropes. I couldn't cut it even if I could kill the fellows before they got it down, and even if I got clear away I should have to come down somewhere or else get blown out to sea and starve and go mad if I didn't get drowned.

"No; I've had my fun, and I'll end the game here, and now. I don't care very much for fame, but the world shall remember the way I went out of it as long as Anarchy itself is remembered. Yes, cheer away, my friends! You see they've got it into position and four brave men—volunteers no doubt—are getting into the car to come and pull a lonely and defenceless Anarchist off the top of Nelson's Column. A glorious exploit, but it will be more glorious before it's finished—for me if not for you. It's a good job there isn't a breath of wind stirring, even up here.



The balloon slowly rose in a vertical line.

"Yes, it is rising perfectly straight. It will come to within about ten feet of the capital and then I suppose they'll throw out grappling irons and haul it up close, and then they think there will be a bit of a fight. What a set of fools. Here it comes. It's only about fifty feet away now, so here goes. I wish to God I could live to see the end of the fun!"

The gigantic crowd which thronged, not only the Square but all the approaches to it, was staring upwards with strained fixed eyes all concentrated on the great mass of the balloon, which slowly rose in a vertical line from the waggon containing the windlass up towards the capital on which stood Max Renault, alone and forsaken, and really at bay at last.

The spectators expected to see him dragged off the capital and into the car and then brought down again. A strong guard of police and Dragoons from the Horse Guards kept a large open space round the waggon, and stood ready to protect the prisoner from the infuriated multitude that was longing to tear him limb from limb, but both mob and guard were destined to be disappointed in a fashion at once as terrible as it was unexpected. As the top of the balloon rose to within a dozen feet of the edge of the capital they saw the figure of their anticipated victim leap from where he stood down into the midst of the swelling mass of inflated silk.

In the instant that he did so they saw the sunlight flash upon something bright that he held in his hand. Instinctively everyone grasped at least a portion of his desperate intention, and a mighty roar of rage and horror rose up simultaneously from tens of thousands of throats. Then there came silence, a silence of speechless, breathless apprehension. Then those who thronged the upper windows of the buildings round saw the knife flash to and fro through the riven silk. The knife dropped and Max took something from his mouth and rubbed it on the breast of his coat. Then came a spark of fire, a mighty rush of pale blue flame, and then a frightful

Digitized by Google

explosion. The balloon burst like a huge bubble in a momentary mist of flame, and car and rope crashed down on to the waggon, spattering it and all the pavement about it with the blood and mangled remains of the four would-be captors and the victim who had destroyed them with himself. And so, outwitting both the false friends who had betrayed him, and the foes who would have taken him alive, died Max Renault—game to the last.

Twelve hours later the *Revanche*, far away over the North Sea a little to the northward of the Arctic Circle, was driving to the north-eastward before a furious gale blowing at a speed of over eighty miles an hour. For four hours she had been flying against it, with the whole power of her engines concentrated on the stern propellers, and at the end of that four hours Taxil went to Hartog, who was steering in the conning-tower, and said:

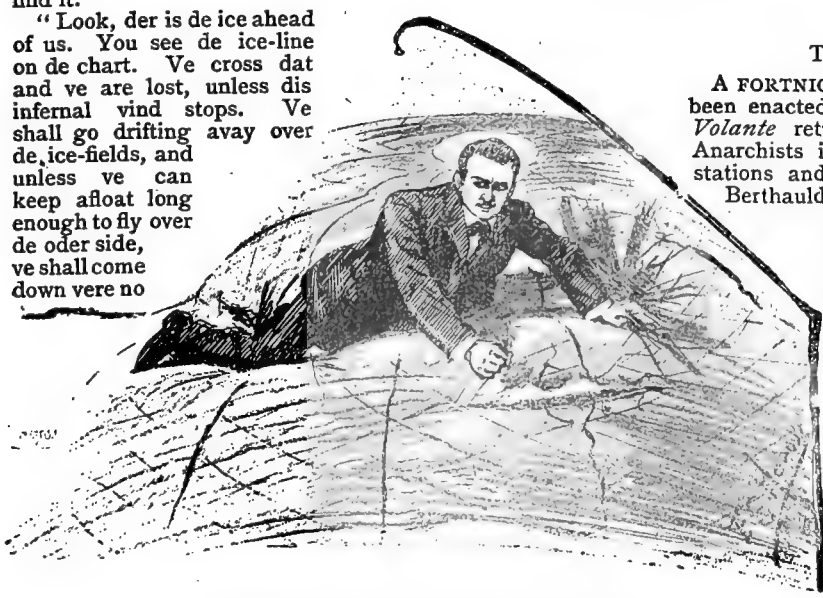
"We have only a couple of hundredweight of the fuel left, and I have just been to the reserve reservoirs in Max's cabin, and they're empty."

"Empty! Vat is dat you say? Mein Gott, den dere is treachery on board even now!" Hartog almost screamed, half in passion and half in fear. "Max vould never haf been such a fool as to come on a voyage like dis mit only fuel enough for about two tousand miles on board her. Some von has emptied dose reservoirs, and I believe it is dat defil of a girl who has done it. She is de only von who can have known of dem besides you."

"Don't call Lea 'devil' in my hearing, please," said Taxil curtly. "Or you and I will quarrel. I don't believe Max would have told her about them, and if she had known she couldn't have opened them, for I took the keys from Max myself, and they have never been out of my possession. It's no good shouting or calling names. The question is, what are we to do? We are using all our power now and not making forty miles an hour headway. In three hours all the fuel will be done, and then we shall just drop into the sea, for we are a good four hundred miles from land anywhere. We must turn the power on to the fans and keep her afloat at any risk."

"But, Gottsdonnerwetter, man, don't you see vat dat means?" shouted Franz, who was now almost in a frenzy of fear at the prospect he saw so clearly before him. "Look here at dis chart. Ve are very little south of de Arctic Circle, and dis infernal vind is blowing a hurricane. If ve stop de screws ve shall go north at someting like sixty miles an hour, and, by tam, if no von has found de Pole yet ve shall soon find it.

"Look, der is de ice ahead of us. You see de ice-line on de chart. Ve cross dat and ve are lost, unless dis infernal vind stops. Ve shall go drifting avay over de ice-fields, and unless ve can keep afloat long enough to fly over de oder side, ve shall come down vere no living man has ever been, and den you vill have reason to see how fondt you are of your Lea, for, by tam, you vill vant to eat her."



The knife flashed to and fro through the riven silk.

The words were hardly out of his mouth before Taxil's knife leapt out of its sheath, flashed for a moment before Franz's eyes, and then sank deep into his breast. Almost without a groan he dropped to the floor of the conning tower, and as he did so the fearful thought flashed across Taxil's mind that he had killed the only man now left among the Anarchists who possessed the secret of the motor-fuel.

Almost mechanically he locked the steering-wheel, went into the engine-room, turned the power of two engines on to the lifting fans, and slowed the centre propeller down to half speed. Then he went back to the conning-tower, set the airship's head across the storm, locked the wheel again, and went to Lea's cabin to tell her what had happened.

When morning came the *Revanche* was flying in the midst of a furious snow-storm across a white, desolate wilderness, which could be dimly seen through the thick flying flakes. The power of the engines was visibly failing. Only a few pounds of the precious fuel now remained. In a last despairing effort Taxil concentrated all the power left at his disposal upon the lifting fans, determined to keep afloat over the icy grave that lay beneath him as long as he could. But this was not for very long. The speed of the fans visibly slackened, and slowly the *Revanche* began to sink down through the snow to the awful silent wilderness in which her last voyage was to end.

"It's all over, I'm afraid, Lea," he said to her as they stood shivering side by side on deck. "We shan't be long before we meet the fate that I fear now we have deserved."

"Deserved!" she cried, in a voice that came brokenly from between her chattering teeth. "That *you* have deserved, you mean, you cowardly, treacherous hound. If it hadn't been for you and your treachery Max would still be in command, and the *Revanche* would still be floating in triumph through the air. You have given him over to his enemies, but, thank God, I've avenged him."

"You!" he gasped, clutching her arm in a savage grasp. "What do you mean?"

"I mean that I and Sophie emptied the reserve reservoirs. Do you think I was going to let a wretched little cur like you reign in Renault's place? Not I—not even to save myself from a fate like this. Now I have told you. Kill me if you like!"

And, as she spoke, the *Revanche* touched the snow-covered surface of the Polar ice.

CHAPTER LII.

The Syndicate Prepares to Act.

A FORTNIGHT after the last tragedy of Renault's life had been enacted in Trafalgar Square the *War-Hawk* and the *Volante* returned from their work of exterminating the Anarchists in the Southern hemisphere, and exploring their stations and treasure-stores, under the guidance of René Berthauld. They dropped to earth for a few minutes on Lundy Island to learn the news of what had happened in their absence, and to telegraph the hour of their arrival in London to Mr. Maxim at the offices of the Syndicate.

Of course, the first news that was told them was the story of Renault's fate, and as soon as Sir Harry heard it he turned to Mr. Austen and Adams, who was standing beside him, and said:

"Well, there's an end of that part of my undertaking, and I must confess that it is a more dramatic one than I think I could have brought about myself, for I must either have sent him into eternity out of a pitched battle or else, if I had caught him alive, I could only have handed him over to the law, to be hung prosaically, like any commonplace murderer. I must own, too, that the exit he made for himself was more worthy of him, for, wild beast as the

Digitized by Google

fellow was, there was something about his cold-blooded pluck and pitiless thoroughness that even I can't help admiring."

"Yes," said Adams quietly. "If he had only been born five hundred years ago he would have probably been a shining light of chivalry, and one of the finest soldiers of his time; and even now, if it hadn't been for that twist in his intellect that made him an Anarchist, he would have made about the ablest dictator that a South American Republic could have wished for."

"If he hadn't devoted himself to politics," added Mr. Austen drily, "and risen to the same position in France. Still, whatever he was, or might have been, the world is very well rid of him. Now, I think we had better go on board again and get off to London. We can read up the rest of the news *en route* from the papers."

Three hours later, that is to say about ten o'clock at night, the two air-ships touched earth again in the middle of Hyde Park. Sir Harry, Mr. Austen, Adams, Dr. Roberts, Violet, and Dora at once disembarked, taking with them two of the *War-Hawk's* crew to carry Violet's invalid chair, and then the air-ships immediately rose again and vanished into the darkness.

The party went straight to Sir Harry's town house in Grosvenor Place, where they found the Chairman of the Syndicate already awaiting them. Then the directors forthwith shut themselves in the library to hold the meeting that had been arranged by telegraph, while the two girls betook themselves to Violet's sitting-room for a quiet chat until supper-time. Dr. Roberts not being a member of the Syndicate, and having, apparently, nothing particular to do, vanished mysteriously. About half an hour later there came a knock at the door of Violet's room, and as Dora cried "Come in," it opened, and the doctor entered.

The "Revanche" touched the snow-covered surface of the Polar ice.

"I have brought a visitor for you, Miss Violet—someone who has come on rather important business, so you must excuse the lateness of the hour." Then, before she could reply he threw the door wide open, and, without any further introduction, in walked Wyndham, not only alive, but as well and hearty as he had ever looked in his life. Dora controlled her astonishment with a success that was almost suspicious; but Violet sat for a moment transfixed and rigid, with wide-staring eyes and her hands clutching the arms of her chair convulsively. Just as Wyndham was running forward to her the doctor stopped him, and said, in a short, sharp tone:

"Wait—and you will see something!"

And so he did, for the next moment Violet's whole body seemed shaken by an overpowering emotion; then, raising herself on her arms, she struggled to her feet and with a glad cry of:

"Bertie! Bertie! Then you are not dead after all!" tottered half way across the room and fell fainting into his arms.

It had been a risky experiment, but it had succeeded as Doctor Roberts had been confident it would when he arranged the sending of the false telegram to Lundy which Violet had read in Utopia. The violent and unexpected emotional shock had overcome the remaining nervous weakness that had been day by day diminished by careful treatment and nursing, and under its stimulus the interrupted nerve-connections had been restored, and the muscles of her lower limbs once more placed under the control of her brain. Wyndham lifted her up and laid her on the sofa, and in a very few minutes the doctor had brought her back to consciousness.

"Now see if you can stand up again," he said to her when she had swallowed a fairly stiff glass of brandy and water.

"I think I can," she said, and then, giving one hand to him and another to Wyndham, she raised herself slowly, but steadily, from the sofa and stood once more erect upon her feet.

"That will do," said the doctor. "Now sit down again and don't over-exert yourself whatever you do. Come along, Miss Dora. You and I have nothing more to do here. The case is now one which demands strictly private treatment and we can leave her with perfect safety in Lieutenant Wyndham's hands. You can come back later on and bring her down to supper."

The meeting of the directors lasted an hour, and during that time Mr. Maxim told them that the building of the fleet has progressed very satisfactorily, and that within twenty-four hours a fleet of five-and-twenty vessels, not counting the *War-Hawk*, the *Volante*, and the now repaired *Vengeur*, would be ready to take the air, fully equipped for the assault on the Anarchists' stronghold at Mount Pietra.

"I quite agree with you, gentlemen," he said in concluding his report, "that it will be much better to dispose of these scoundrels before we commence our final undertaking. A fortnight ago—in fact on the very day that Renault put an end to himself—they abandoned their previous tactics and, instead of operating as a fleet and according to some definite plan of action, they scattered, and every one of the ships seems to have gone off on a raiding expedition of her own.

"For about a week they absolutely terrorised the Continent from end to end. They set fire to towns and villages, slaughtered people by hundreds, and then landed, armed to the teeth, and committed the most unheard of crimes under cover of their ships' guns. Then they suddenly disappeared, and for the last five or six days no one has heard anything about them. The whole world has been looking for them, for no one knew what country was to be attacked next, but so far not a single ship has made her appearance again.

Digitized by Google

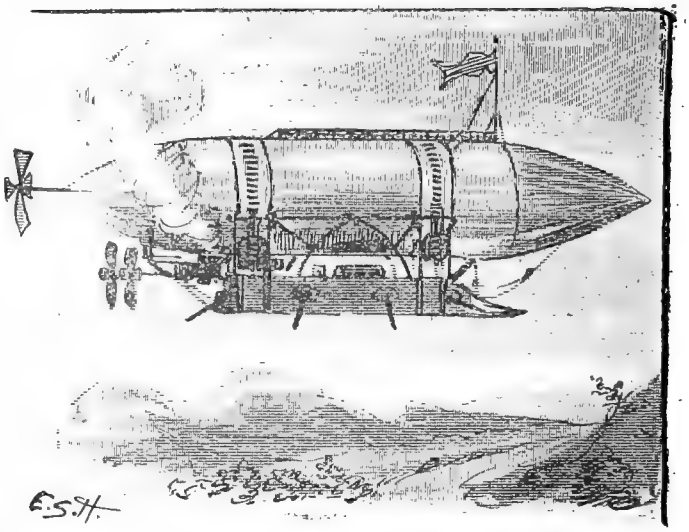
"Now, putting two and two together, it seems to me that there has been a mutiny in the Anarchist camp, the first result of which was the abandonment of Renault on the top of Nelson's Column. No doubt they fought about the secret of the fuel. Renault probably refused to give it up and so in revenge they gave *him* up to his enemies. Then with what fuel they had left they went on one last burst of wickedness and then retired to their camp, where I expect you will find they have left their air-ships and scattered back to their old haunts."

"That may be true of the majority of them," said Mr. Austen, "but I'm afraid it is too good to be true of that scoundrel Hartog and the *Revanche*. This man Berthauld has told us that he is an extremely clever chemist as well as engineer and, difficult and risky as the job would be, it is just possible that he has got possession of some of the fuel and analysed it. If he has done that one can easily see why he should stir up a revolt against Renault and insure his being killed or executed so as to be the only possessor of the secret himself. At the same time I confess that that doesn't square with the fact that the *Revanche* herself has not reappeared."

"Another probability," suggested Adams, "is that some one else has killed Hartog for just the same reason. I was quite sure that these scoundrels could never stick together as long as one of them had a secret like that. The proverbial apple of discord would be a mere nothing to it. However, I suppose we shall find all that out before long. And now with regard to the war, Mr. Maxim, how does that actually stand?"

"In this way," replied the Chairman. "Thanks chiefly to the really wonderful exploits of Lieutenant Wyndham in

Violet fell fainting into his arms.



An aerostat.

command of the *Nautilus*, and Renault's destruction of the French and Russian fleets in the Baltic, France and Russia have been thoroughly well thrashed at sea. England, of course, lost very heavily as well; but public opinion woke the Admiralty up so thoroughly that wonderful progress has been made in refitting damaged ships and getting others into commission that were nearly finished, so there is now an ample force to guard the coast and put any attempted invasion out of the question. As for the Russian squadron in the East, it is simply a thing of the past.

"On land, however, things seem to be going rather the other way. Germany is hemmed in between France and Russia, and is getting decidedly the worst of it. Italy has no money, and Austria seems afraid to begin; while, with the exception of the ten thousand men that England threw into Antwerp before the declaration of war—thanks also to the *Nautilus*—she is not able to do very much to help Germany. There is a scheme on foot, however, for her to finance Italy, which I believe is nearly completed, and if she does that the war will probably become general—that is to say, of course, if we allowed it, which I suppose," he added, with a smile, "you gentlemen of Utopia would not think of for a moment."

"Certainly not," said both Adams and Mr. Austen in a breath.

"I thought so," continued Mr. Maxim. "Well, we shall be in a position to send in the ultimatum the moment you come back from your expedition to Mount Pietra. You know of course that the Russians have a fleet of navigable aerostats similar to those which Renault destroyed over the Baltic, but I don't think they'll give you any trouble, for they are huge clumsy things and no use at all for aerial fighting.

"Still they've done a tremendous amount of execution on the land forces, and according to report it's quite impossible to keep the bravest troops steady when they once begin operations. We haven't had a visit from them over here yet, probably because the Russians have a wholesome anticipation of what would happen if either of the two air-ships that they know we possess happen to be on hand to receive them.

"Now I think that's everything except the terms of the ultimatum. I have got a draft of it here which I'll read to you, and then we can make any alterations that are necessary."

As he spoke the chairman took a sheet of foolscap from his pocket, opened it, and read as follows:—

Offices of the Aerial Navigation Syndicate,
Victoria Street,
Westminster, S.W.
(Date).

To His Imperial Majesty,
The Emperor of the Russias.

Sire,—I have been instructed by the Directors of this Syndicate to respectfully inform Your Majesty that unless all hostilities on sea and land on the part of Russia and France cease within forty-eight hours

Digitized by Google

of the receipt of this ultimatum, and unless within a further period of forty-eight hours satisfactory undertakings are entered into on the part of the said two nations to pay into the Bank of England to the account of this Syndicate the sum of five hundred millions (English pounds sterling) as war indemnity, the capitals and principal cities of the two countries will be bombarded and destroyed and all troops remaining in the field will be dispersed by the aerial fleets of the Syndicate without further notice. A note identical with this has been sent to the President of the French Republic, and both have been despatched with the knowledge and consent of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, with which the forces at the disposal of the Syndicate will henceforth co-operate. In the hope that Your Majesty will appreciate the necessity of replying with as little delay as possible,

I have the honour to subscribe myself,

Your Majesty's obedient servant.

HIRAM S. MAXIM

(Chairman of the Aerial Navigation Syndicate).

"How do you think that meets the case?" he continued, laying the paper down on the blotting pad in front of him.

"Excellently, I should think," said Sir Harry. "Though I can imagine it won't be very pleasant reading for His Majesty and M. le President. Still, I don't think it contains anything unreasonable or over-stated. The indemnity from the two countries is only half what Germany exacted from France in '71; and, even if we have to proceed to extremities, there will still be an enormous saving of human life. Of course, they won't be able to hold out against it for a week, especially if we work with the Germans and bring the Italian troops into the field as well. I don't see that it wants any alteration as it stands, do you?" he said, looking round at the others.

Everyone agreed with him, and the proceedings were terminated by a knock at the door and the entrance of Violet, walking slowly, but steadily, with her right arm through Lieutenant Wyndham's and her left through Dora's.

"Good evening, gentlemen!" she said, with a low laugh, as they all sprang to their feet in sheer amazement. "We have come to tell you that supper is ready."

(To be continued.)

THE MYSTERY OF POST No. 3

THE moon was shining brightly, illuminating the sandy plain round the fort as only the moon in Arizona can illuminate. The officers, soldiers, and their families were peacefully sleeping. Not a sound was heard except the occasional cry of a coyote.

Three o'clock struck, and the sentinel on post No. 1 started the call:

"No. 1, three o'clock, and all's well."

A slight pause, and No. 2 responded:

"No. 2, three o'clock, and all's well."

Then came a long pause.

The sergeant of the guard stepped out of the guard-room and listened.

"The sentinel on No. 3 must be asleep," he remarked. "Bad business for a sentinel guarding the corral."

Turning to No. 1 he commanded:

"Start the call again."

No. 1 obeyed. No. 2 took it up. But there again it ended. The sergeant turned out a patrol, and marched to the corral.

As he approached the sentinel's post in the moonlight he saw the figure of No. 3 stretched out on the ground. The position did not look like that of a sleeping man.

"Double time!" commanded the sergeant.

And the patrol came down the post at a run. As the men came closer to the figure, a sight met their eyes that froze the blood in their veins. Lying face down on the sand, his hand still grasping his rifle, was their comrade, stiff and cold in death, an Apache arrow buried deep in his body.

Three sharp cracks of the rifle, the rattle of the long roll of the drum, soon brought out the startled garrison.

Scouts were instantly sent out and the plain thoroughly scoured, but no signs of Indians could be found.

The next day, with muffled drums, the members of the garrison followed the body of their comrade to its last resting-place. With uncovered heads, sorrowfully and reverently, they listened while the post-chaplain read the burial service. The military escort fired three rounds over the grave, and the bugler played the sweetest of all calls, "Taps—lights out—sleep." Naturally, a gloom was thrown over the whole post.

The soldiers gathered in small groups and discussed the perplexed question. "How could it have been done?" The moon had been shining brightly, and there was no cover behind which an Indian could hide.

The searching parties came in after fruitless hunts. Night came on. There would be no lack of vigilance on the part of the sentinel on post No. 3. The moon was even brighter than on the preceding night, and the objects on the plain could be seen almost as distinctly as in the daytime.

Each half hour the call of No. 1 was promptly answered by the other sentinels.

Few expected a repetition of the preceding night's cowardly attack. Gradually the garrison became silent, and one by one the lights went out. Morning came, and nothing had happened to disturb the peace of the fort.

Several days past and the post settled down into its old ways, and the memory of the dreadful event was beginning to fade.

The officer of the day was making the inspection of the sentinels after midnight, and was approaching No. 3, when the moon burst forth, revealing at the very feet of the officer the body of the sentinel as before, pierced through by an Indian arrow.

The alarm was quickly given, but, in spite of the most careful search, no trace of the assassin could be found. A horror settled over the post. No one dreaded an enemy they knew, and could fight openly, but against such ghostly attacks no one could defend himself.

At officers' call the next morning the affair was earnestly discussed. It was evidently wrong to require a sentinel to keep watch in such an exposed and dangerous place, and yet, with the corral where it was, no one could see how it could be avoided.

While discussing the problem, an orderly appeared and reported:

"Private Rogers would like to speak to the commanding officer."

The commanding officer went into his private office, and, after the interview, returned to the room where the officers were assembled.

"Young Rogers has asked permission to take charge of post No. 3 at night until he solves the mystery, and I have granted his request."

The faces of the officers showed plainly the anxiety they felt. Young Rogers was the son of a brother captain in their

Digitized by Google

regiment, who at that time was stationed in an Eastern city on recruiting service.

The young man had enlisted six months previously, with the object of obtaining an officer's commission, which may be won by a worthy and capable man.

The young fellow had gained the esteem and respect of everyone by his manly qualities and strict obedience to orders. Many of the officers had known him from his childhood. He had been the playmate of their children, and a great favourite with all. Later on many tried to persuade him to withdraw his request.

"Take the post if it falls to your lot, but don't volunteer," they pleaded.

It was of no use. The young man had a theory, and if he proved it and discovered the assassin he knew that he would get his coveted commission.

He was excused from all duties during the day, and after nightfall assumed charge of the dreaded post, No. 3. Three nights passed without any event. The moon, though on the wane, was still bright enough to allow Rogers to see any moving object on the plain.

Seated on the ground, his back against the corral, his rifle on his knee, he was apparently asleep. Apparently only, for his sharp eyes keenly watched every point of the plain. He knew that he had a tricky, shrewd, but, at the same time, bold enemy in that wily Apache. He felt sure that the Indians, especially in the second case, had not crept upon his victim unobserved. He must have employed some disguise which had completely deceived the sentinel. What was this disguise?

"That Apache would be more apt to betray himself if he thought me asleep than he would if he saw I was watching him," was his sound argument.

Through the long hours of the night he sat motionless. It was two o'clock, when suddenly he caught sight of a moving object on the plain some distance away. Noiselessly he cocked his rifle. He was a dead shot, and woe to that object when he fired. Nearer and nearer it came, while he sat as if asleep.

"Why, it is Corporal!" he suddenly exclaimed.

Corporal was a fine, large Newfoundland dog, a pet of the garrison, which had mysteriously disappeared from the post some time before, and which every one supposed to have been stolen.

Rogers' first impulse was to call the dog, when he remembered his resolution—"shoot any moving object that comes within range." He therefore restrained his impulse, and no one would have guessed that the apparently sleeping sentinel was closely watching every movement as the dog approached.

It was a lucky idea of Rogers to feign sleep, for as the dog came nearer he thought he noticed something peculiar in its appearance, and its actions did not seem quite natural.

"Possibly Corporal may be exhausted from hunger, or it may be the deceptive light of the moon," thought Rogers. The dog was now within range, and he could hesitate no longer.

"It's a matter of life and death," he reflected, "and if I make a mistake every one, even Corporal himself, will forgive me."

Slowly and imperceptibly he brought his rifle to his shoulder, a short but true aim, a crack, and a yell—such as only an Apache who has received his death wound can give—startled the whole garrison.

As if by magic everyone collected on the spot, each, as he approached, evidently expecting to see a repetition of the tragedies.

The story was soon told. The skin of poor Corporal had been used as a disguise by the Apache, who, with a bow in hand, had been creeping up on his third intended victim. Deceived by the apparently sleeping sentinel, he had been led to betray himself, and had met a most merited death. Undoubtedly he had, by the same device, deceived the other sentinels, and had very nearly succeeded in securing another scalp.

Young Rogers was overwhelmed with congratulations. A special report was at once made to the War Department, and before long he received as a reward his much-coveted commission.

ARTHUR TURNER was tall, blonde, handsome, and twenty-eight. He was also the possessor of a long head, inherited from the maternal side of the house. He was likewise a dutiful son.

It was the two latter circumstances that had, on more than one occasion, saved him from making a triumphant ass of himself.

There was that dear little Miss Dixon, whom he had met at the seaside. It had been a glorious evening—that last. They were sitting on the verandah, where they might see and yet be unseen. The soft, dreamy strains of a Strauss waltz floated out from the ballroom. There was the pale silver light of the moon, the murmuring ripple of the waves on the beach—and all that sort of thing, which you have read about so many times that you have learned to skip it in the novels.

Well! Elsie was going away—too, too soon. They had talked in sighs and murmurs for half an hour; Arthur's left hand clasped Elsie's dimpled right one, his right arm was about her waist; both hearts beat vigorously, as hearts will on such occasions, and Arthur had just begun to tell Elsie what she had been waiting for two weeks to hear, when there was a step close at hand, and the cooing voice of the maternal Turner said:—

"I beg your pardon, but will you please excuse Arthur a few moments? There are those miserable business affairs that must be attended to in time for the late mail."

And thus was he saved providentially, for Elsie had not a cent, and neither had he—at least, not many of them. There were several other occasions when his own long head, or his mamma's had helped him out—for Arthur was somewhat susceptible. But it is not of these I have to tell.

His time had come. The in-every-way-desirable young person had presented herself. True, she was not so young as she had been: but, then, that was a mere trifle. She was just his own age, of as good a family as his own, and an heiress of considerable degree. She was not—well, not exactly handsome, and was *rather* inclined to what is politely called plumpness; but Arthur's mamma and Arthur's long head gave their approval—and Arthur did not care who she might be so long as she possessed the above qualifications, particularly the one involving a very neat fortune in her own right.

Besides, Arthur was getting a bit desperate. In fact, he had so far exceeded his own salary and the maternal allowance (which, by the way, was as large as Mrs. Turner could afford), that nothing short of a miracle, or a matrimonial alliance such as he had been so long seeking, could save him from getting into very deep water

Digitized by Google

And thus it came to pass that this winter found him engaged to Miss Mildred Field, much to the satisfaction of his mother, who was visiting in Scotland, and to whom he, like the dutiful son he was, sent the gratifying news at once.

He was disappointed, however, on one point. He had pleaded artfully for an early wedding, but Miss Field had set her foot down with much firmness, and said he must go through a long probationary period—all of which Arthur failed to understand. He had always been noted for his persuasive powers, and had flattered himself that Mildred, with her gentle, clinging bud-like ways, would succumb at once.

Now, be it known, that Miss Mildred Field had not arrived at years of discretion for nothing. Neither had she, a not unprepossessing young person, with nearly half a million in her own right, passed through the experience of ten seasons without gathering unto herself much knowledge of the ways and wiles of wicked man. She had had, as might have been expected, offers to a high number; but, thus far, the gentlemen concerned had failed—by reason of their unanimous desire to touch her purse—to touch, in the first place, the all-important key to it, which was hidden away in her plump bosom. And Miss Mildred Field was worldly-wise in her day and generation.

She was certainly in love with Turner—there could be no doubt of that. It is quite as certain that she was very seriously in love with him; but, with the wisdom born of experience, she did not let him know one-half of what she felt for him.

If any one had told Turner that he was just now in a very shaky position he would have scoffed. His chum, Ted Cross, who was spending the winter at the house during Mrs. Turner's absence, had once suggested that "there's many a slip," but Arthur merely flung a shoe at him, and whistled serenely.

It was in this frame of mind that, one evening in February, he ran lightly up the steps of the Fields' house to call on her whom Cross unfeelingly referred to as his "little lady-love." It was warm, and the front-door stood ajar. The little footman was not in his accustomed place, so Turner, with the air of one who knew just where he was going, stepped inside. From the open door of Papa Field's study came the sound of voices in earnest discussion, and one of them spoke his name.

He halted, irresolute, as would any one else under like circumstances. Papa Field was speaking:

"Of course, my dear, you are your own mistress, and I can only advise you. It seems to me, however, that you have done a very foolish thing to engage yourself to this young Turner. True, he seems an exemplary young fellow, and he comes of an excellent family; but it is well-known that he has only a small allowance from the estate in addition to a beggarly five hundred pounds salary. How do you know it is you, and not your money, that he wants? It is a brutal question, I know, but it is one you have probably asked of yourself half-a-dozen times concerning other young men."

Arthur, out in the hall, standing in much the same attitude as a girl assumes, when speaking her first "piece" in school, winced, but waited for the answer. It came, in serious, thoughtful tones, which indicated plainly that Miss Mildred, also, had considered this very matter.

"N—no, I am sure you misjudge him. Of course, I understand how he is situated financially, and—and all that. But I am sure he is honest and honourable, and that he—he cares for me very much. There are a thousand ways by which I can learn much that you cannot, and——."

"Yes, yes; I understand. But suppose you should put him to the test. Do you think he would come through—ah—er—unscathed, as it were? Suppose you should tell him that I had lost all your money and mine in unfortunate speculation—that we were beggars, and had not a penny we could call our own? Are you afraid to try him?"

There was a brief silence. Then:

"I don't like to tell a falsehood, papa; but it would be only a 'white lie,' and perhaps for the best. Yes, I'll try him to-morrow night."

"That's my dutiful girl. Now run along and let me work."

There was the sound of a kiss, and the perspiring young man in the hall hastened to get out of the house. He wanted time to think, but the first thing that entered his head as he reached the pavement was a fanciful picture of the *petite* Miss Field, with her one hundred and sixty pounds avoirdupois, "running along," and he smiled broadly. Then he walked rapidly over to the next street to take a cab to his club, there to hold a pow-wow with Cross.

On the steps he hesitated for a moment.

"Had I better go back now?" he thought. "No; she won't have her little tale of woe ready, and might be put out if I call to-night. I might give myself away, too. Better have time to get my speech prepared." And this astute young man went in and proceeded to make himself comfortable.

The next evening, with his usual light heart and good spirits, he rang the door-bell of No. 1, Bellevue Square, the residence of the Fields. Yes, Miss Field was in, Peter said. Turner went into the drawing-room and sat down, running rapidly over in his mind the various tender speeches he had prepared for the emergency. Mildred was a long time coming, he thought, for one who expected him.

Presently she entered—slowly—heavily. Her head bent low over her ample bosom, and her breath came short and fast. Turner went forward to meet her, his arms oustretched. He was something of an actor himself, and he knew it.

"Mildred, darling. What is the trouble with my little girl?" (Another good stroke. Miss Field liked to be called "little.")

"Oh, Arthur, Arthur. I don't know how to tell you. It is too dreadful! Papa——"

"What! Has your father been——"

"Oh, no, not that, but—worse. Arthur, we are—beggars!"

And Miss Field, delivering these last words with wonderful impressiveness, hung her head and sobbed bitterly behind her lace handkerchief.

Then it was that Turner, like the young man of action that he was, put his arm as far round his tearful *fiancée* as possible, and, with some difficulty, led her to a seat and pulled her head down on his glossy shirt front.

He was very sorry, as she must know. But it was nothing. Her father would recoup himself—he had many influential friends. As for her, had she not him—her Arthur? He would not, he once interrupted her to say, permit her, through a sense of false pride, to cast him off now, when she most needed him. No, never.

He had six hundred a year. It wasn't much, he knew; but they could live on it. And did she suppose for one instant that he had expected to live on his wife's money? No, a thousand times, no!

"We will have a real quiet little wedding, dearest; and, after it is all over, we will go quietly to our own little cottage in the suburbs, which you and I will get ready in the meantime, and there we will be the happiest couple in the world. What! Mildred, am I to understand that you laugh at my cherished plans?"

For Mildred had leaped to her feet, and was laughing heartily.

"Why, you foolish boy, I was only teasing you a bit. Don't you think I'd make a good actress? Papa and I haven't lost a——"

Here was Mr. Turner's opportunity. She had doubted him; oh, cruel blow! If she could not trust him now, how could she have any faith in him when they were married? Perhaps, after all, it were best——

And he strode haughtily to the door.

But this was not part of Miss Field's programme, and she did what any very-much-in-love female would do under the circumstances; so that, in a very few seconds, two people were sitting on a divan in a very lover-like attitude indeed.

. . . . . .

An hour later a young man, walking briskly down the street, was reflecting on the vagaries of chance and his own good luck.

If Peter had been at the door—if he had been ten minutes later—if he had sneezed in the hall—if——

"It was an awfully close shave," he reflected, and he stopped and shook hands with himself, much to the amazement of the policeman at the corner.

Digitized by Google

Bibber's Charity.

YOUNG Bibber broke one of his rules of life the other day and came to the City. This unusual journey into the marts of trade and finance was in response to a call from his lawyer, who wanted his signature to some papers. It was five years since Bibber had been anywhere in the city, except as a transient traveller from Liverpool Street, and as he walked through Cheapside he looked about him at the new buildings in the air and the bustle and confusion of the streets with as much interest as a lately arrived immigrant.

Bibber rather enjoyed the novelty of the situation, and after he had completed his business at the lawyer's office he tried to stroll along Threadneedle Street as he did in Piccadilly.

As he went through the crowded thoroughfares, a miserable-looking, dirty, and bloated object stood still in his track and begged Bibber for a few halfpence to buy food.

"I've come all the way from Birmingham," said the object, "and I haven't tasted food for twenty-four hours."

Bibber drew away as though the object had a contagious disease in his rags, and handed him a shilling without waiting to receive the man's blessing.

"Poor fellow," said Bibber. "Fancy going without eating all day."

He could not fancy this, though he tried, and the impossibility of it impressed him so much that he amiably determined to go back and hunt up the object and give him more money.

Bibber's ideas of a dinner were rather exalted. He did not know of places where a shilling was good for a square meal, including "one roast, three vegetables, and pastry." He hardly considered a shilling a sufficiently large tip for a waiter who served the dinner, and decidedly not enough for the dinner itself.

He did not see the man at first, and when he did the man did not see him. Bibber watched him stop three gentlemen, two of whom gave him some money, and then the object approached Bibber and repeated his sad tale in a monotone. He evidently did not recognise Bibber, and the club-man gave him half-a-crown and walked away, feeling that the man surely must have enough by this time with which to get something to eat, if only a luncheon instead of a dinner.

This retracing of his footsteps had confused Bibber, and he made a complete circuit of the block before he discovered that he had lost his bearings. He was standing just where he had started from, and gazing along the line of the road, looking for a cab, when the familiar accents of the object again saluted him.

When Bibber faced him, the beggar looked uneasy. He was not sure whether or not he had approached this particular gentleman before, but Bibber conceived an idea of much subtlety, and deceived the object by again putting his hand in his pocket.

"Nothing to eat for twenty-four hours? Dear me!" drawled the club-man. "Haven't you any money, either?"

"Not a penny," groaned the object; "an' I'm jest faint for food, s'help me. I hate to beg, sir. It isn't the money I want, it's jest food. I'm starvin', sure."

"Well," said Bibber suddenly, "if it is only something to eat you want, come in here and I'll give you your breakfast."

But the man held back, and began to whine and complain that they wouldn't let the likes of him in such a fine place.

"Oh, yes, they will," said Bibber, glancing at the bill of fare in front of the place. "It seems to be extremely cheap. Beefsteak, one shilling, for instance. Go in," he added, and there was something in his tone which made the object move ungraciously into the eating-house.

It was a very cheap place, Bibber thought, and the people stared very hard at him and his gloves and the gardenia in his coat and at the tramp accompanying him.

"You ain't going to eat two breakfasts, are yer?" asked one of the waiters of the object.

The object looked uneasy, and Bibber, who stood beside his chair, smiled in triumph.

"You're mistaken," he said to the waiter. "This gentleman is starving—he has not tasted food for twenty-four hours. Give him whatever he asks for."

The object scowled, and the waiter grinned behind his tin tray and had the impudence to wink at Bibber, who recovered from this in time to give the man a florin, and so to make him a friend for life. The object ordered milk, but Bibber protested and ordered two beefsteaks and fried potatoes, two omelettes, coffee, and ham with bacon.

"What cher think I am?" yelled the object in desperation.

"Hungry," said Bibber very gently, "or else an impostor. And, you know, if you should happen to be the latter, I should have to hand you over to the police."

Bibber leaned easily against the wall and read the signs about him, and kept one eye on a policeman across the street. The object was choking and cursing through his breakfast. It did not seem to agree with him. Whenever he stopped, Bibber would point with his stick to a still unfinished dish, and the object, after a husky protest, would attack it as though it were poison. The people sitting about were laughing, and the proprietor behind the desk smiled grimly.

"There, darn ye," said the object at last, "I've eat all I can eat for a year. You think you're mighty smart, don't ye? But if you choose to pay that high for your fun, I suppose ye can afford it. Only don't let me catch you about these streets after dark, that's all."

And the object started off, shaking his fist.

"Wait a minute," said Bibber; "you haven't paid the waiter for your breakfast."

"Haven't what?" shouted the object. "Paid him! How could I pay him? Youse asked me to come in here and eat. I didn't want no breakfast, did I? Youse'll have to pay for your fun yerself, or they'll trow yer out."

"I gave you," said Bibber slowly, "three and sixpence to buy a breakfast with. The bill comes to four shillings, and extremely cheap it is," he added, with a bow to the fat proprietor. "Several other gentlemen, on your representation that you were starving, gave you other sums to be expended on a breakfast. You have the money with you now, so pay what you owe at once or I'll call that constable across the street and tell him what I know, and have you put where you belong."

"I'll see you blowed first," gasped the object.

Bibber turned to the waiter.

"Kindly beckon to that officer," said he.

The waiter ran to the door, and the object ran too; but the waiter grabbed him by the back of his neck and held him.

"Lemme go!" yelled the object. "Lemme go and I'll pay!"

Everybody in the place came up now, and formed a circle round the group, and watched the object count out four shillings in the waiter's hand, which left him just one penny.

"You have forgotten the waiter who served you," said Bibber severely, pointing with his stick at the penny.

"No, you don't," groaned the object.

"Oh, yes," said Bibber, "do the decent thing now, or I'll——"

The object dropped the penny in the waiter's hand, and Bibber, smiling and easy, made his way through the admiring crowd and out into the street

POSTAL RATES.

SHORT STORIES will be sent direct from these offices, post free, to any country within the Postal Union, at the following rates, prepaid:—

One Year	6s. 6d.
Half Year	3s. 3d.
Three Months	1s. 8d.

Printed and Published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON, at "Pearson's Weekly" Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

A WONDERFUL MEDICINE.

BEECHAM'S PILLS

ARE universally admitted to be **WORTH A GUINEA A BOX** for Bilious and Nervous Disorders, such as Wind and Pain in the Stomach, Sick Headache, Giddiness, Fulness and Swelling after Meals, Dizziness and Drowsiness, Cold Chills, Flushings of Heat, Loss of Appetite, Shortness of Breath, Costiveness, Scurvy, Blotches on the Skin, Disturbed Sleep, Frightful Dreams, and all Nervous and Trembling Sensations, &c. The first dose will give relief in twenty minutes. Every sufferer is earnestly invited to try a box of these Pills, and they will be acknowledged to be

WORTH A GUINEA A BOX.

For Females of all ages these Pills are invaluable, and a few doses of them carry off all humours, and bring about all that is required. No female should be without them. There is no medicine to be found equal to **BEECHAM'S PILLS** for removing any obstruction or irregularity of the system. If taken according to the directions given with each box, they will soon restore females of all ages to sound and robust health. This has been proved by thousands who have tried them and found the benefits which are ensured by their use.

For a Weak Stomach, Impaired Digestion, and all Disorders of the Liver, they act like magic, and a few doses will be found to work wonders on the most important organs in the human machine. They strengthen the whole muscular system, restore the long-lost complexion, bring back the keen edge of appetite, and arouse into action, with the rosebud of health, the whole physical energy of the human frame. These are FACTS testified continually by members of all classes of society, and one of the best guarantees to the Nervous and Debilitated is,

BEECHAM'S PILLS have the Largest Sale of any Patent Medicine in the World,

BEING SIX MILLION BOXES PER ANNUM.

BEECHAM'S COUGH PILLS.

"COLD WEATHER COMES ON WITH A FROWN," and persons suffering from Coughs and kindred troubles should relieve their minds of the idea that nothing will benefit them unless it be in the form of a lozenge, or taken as a liquid. Let them try BEECHAM'S COUGH PILLS, and they will never regret it. These Pills are made from a formula differing entirely from that which guides the manufacture of BEECHAM'S PILLS (*Yellow Label*), but like them will be found reliable. On the first symptoms of a Cold or Chill, a timely dose of BEECHAM'S COUGH PILLS will invariably ward off all dangerous features. For years many families have used no other Winter Medicine. Every householder and traveller should avail themselves of this good, safe, and simple remedy for Coughs in general, Asthma, Bronchial Affections, Hoarseness, Shortness of Breath, Tightness and Oppression of the Chest, Wheezing, &c. Each box bears a GREEN label.

PREPARED ONLY BY

THOMAS BEECHAM, ST. HELEN'S, LANCASHIRE,

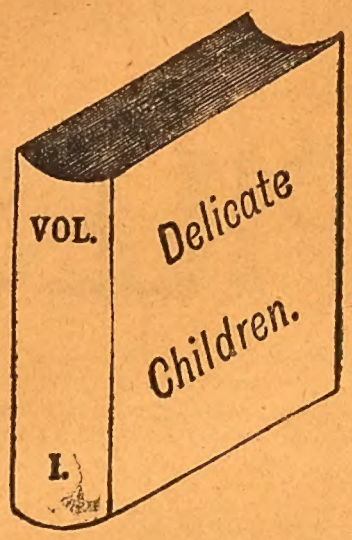
and sold by all Druggists and Patent Medicine Dealers everywhere, in Boxes, **9½d., 1s. 1½d.,** *and* **2s. 9d.** *each.*

WITH FULL DIRECTIONS.

THE 1s. 1½d. BOX CONTAINS FIFTY-SIX PILLS.

All communications respecting Advertisements should be sent to the Advertisement Department, 167, FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C.

Digitized by Google



If your children have failing health from any cause, no matter whether they are healthy children but out of health, or are naturally pale, delicate, and thin, do not hesitate, but procure them a Tonic at once, for no time should be lost in improving the general health of delicate children.

The period of childhood calls loudly for strengthening remedies; remember nature is at work building up tissues, developing nerve sensibilities as well as hardening bony structures. It is, therefore, the only rational treatment; in fact, it is a complete waste of time to give them anything else. Children's ailments when treated tonically yield at once, showing how urgently and terribly needed strengthening remedies are.

Infantina's Syrup is a simple, harmless, pleasant remedy, prepared from pure ingredients of a well-known curative and corrective character. The Hypophosphites of Iron and Lime are delicately united with other tonic and strengthening restoratives. These invaluable Iron and Lime Salts are absolutely essential for the growing tissues, and often health cannot be maintained without them.

Infantina's Syrup forms pure, rich, red blood, and strengthens bony, muscular, and nervous tissues, thus attacking the very root of the delicacy. By its use the appetite increases, flesh is gained, general health augmented, and the whole functions of the body are more energetically performed. Do not forget that consumption, scrofula, anæmia, fits, bow-legs, knock-knees, pigeon-breast, and rickets, as well as other stunted and distorted growths, are entirely due to neglected delicacy in childhood.

There is no better remedy for the ills and ailments of children from two to fifteen years of age than Infantina's Strengthening Syrup, which changes peevish, pale, delicate children into healthy, happy boys and girls.

Recent Testimonials.

Mrs. Hendry, writing from South Shields, states: "Infantina's Syrup has done my children a world of good; in fact, I should not like to be without it."

"Gentlemen,—I consider Infantina's Syrup a most satisfactory medicine for children. Mine are so fond of it that I have to lock the bottle away from them. There certainly is no trouble in getting them to take it. I have given it to three children—three, seven, and twelve years of age—and I can truthfully say it has made new children of them.—Yours sincerely, Caroline Cross."

"Gentlemen,—I can speak most highly of Infantina's Syrup for delicate children. My daughter, I fear, inherited a delicate chest from her grandfather, who died of Consumption. Your Syrup has quite stopped her cough, and she has really commenced to get fat. No other medicine seemed to do her any lasting good. She finds it so pleasant to take that she looks forward to each dose.—Faithfully yours, Mary Knight."

"Dear Sirs,—I have found Infantina's Syrup a wonderfully strengthening medicine for children. I had no idea that a tonic would do so much for a delicate child. My little child has picked up marvellously since taking it.—Sincerely yours, Eveline Hodge."

"Gentlemen,—Infantina Syrup has been a blessing to me. I was quite alarmed about my youngest boy's health; he seemed to eat less and grow weaker every day. I have only given him two bottles, and it has quite changed the child; you would scarcely know it is the same boy.—Yours truly, Mrs. Jane Field."

Sold by Chemists and Patent Medicine Vendors, at 1s. 1½d. per bottle. If you cannot obtain it promptly remit 15 penny stamps to the Infantina Company, 6, Sloane Square, London, S.W., and it will be instantly sent post paid. Full instructions accompany each bottle.

Digitized by Google